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THREE DELIGHTFUL ANTHOLOGIES

London's Lure

AN ANTHOLOGY OF PROSE AND VERSE PASSAGES
BEARING ON LONDON

BY HELEN AND LEWIS MELVILLE

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They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in
great waters ;

These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.

Psalm CVII.

O to sail to sea in a ship !

To leave this steady unendurable land,

To leave the tiresome sameness of the streets, the sidewalks
and the houses,

To leave you O you solid motionless land, and, entering a ship,

To sail and sail and sail !

Walt Whitman.

And did you never lie upon the shore

And watch the curl'd white of the coming wave

Glass'd in the slippery sand before it breaks?

Lord Tennyson.

The ocean with its vastness, its blue green,

Its ships, its rocks, its caves, its hopes, its fears—

Its voice mysterious, which whoso hears

Must think on what will be, and what has been.

John Keats.

#26746

Full Fathom Five

A Sea-Anthology in Prose & Verse

By

Helen and Lewis Melville



THE Publishers have to thank Messrs. Houghton Mifflin Company for permission to make use of the poems by Whittier, Longfellow, and Oliver Wendell Holmes which are included in this volume.



London
G. Bell & Sons
1910

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CHISWICK PRESS: CHARLES WHITTINGHAM AND CO.
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE, LONDON.

TO
WILLIAM CLARK RUSSELL

NOTE

THIS Anthology has no pretensions to be other than a collection of passages in Prose and Verse written about the Sea, selected by the Compilers during several years' reading as possessing at once descriptive power and literary merit.

HELEN MELVILLE.

LEWIS MELVILLE.

SALCOMBE,

HARPENDEN, HERTS.

February 1910.

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PROEM

PROEM

OVER all the face of earth
Main ocean flow'd, nor idle, but with warm
Prolific humour soft'ning all her globe
Fermented the great mother to conceive,
Sate with genial moisture, when God said,
Be gather'd now, ye waters under heav'n,
Into one place, and let dry land appear.
Immediately the mountains huge appear
Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
Into the clouds, their tops ascend the sky.
So high as heaved the tumid hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
Capacious bed of waters: thither they
Hasted with glad precipitance, uproll'd
As drops on dust conglobing from the dry:
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
For haste; such flight the great command imprest
On the swift floods: as armies at the call
Of trumpet, for of armies thou hast heard,
Troop to their standard, so the watery throng,
Wave rolling after wave, where way they found;
If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,
Soft-ebbing: nor withstood them rock or hill,
But they, or under ground, or circuit wide

Full Fathom Five

With serpent error wandering, found their way
And on the washy ooze deep channels wove,
Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
All but within those banks, where rivers now
Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
The dry land, earth; and the great receptacle
Of congregated waters He call'd sea.

John Milton.

I

THE CALL OF THE SEA

THE SEA-CAPTAIN

I AM in love with the sea, but I do not trust her yet;
The tall ships she has slain are ill to forget:
Their sails were white in the morning, their masts
were split by noon:
The sea has seen them perish, and the stars, and
the moon.

As a man loves a woman, so I love the sea,
And even as my desire of her is her desire of me:
When we meet after parting, we put away regret,
Like lover joined with lover; but I do not trust
her yet.

For fierce she is and strange, and her love is kin to
hate;
She must slay whom she desires; she will draw me
soon or late
Down into darkness and silence, the place of drown'd
men,
Having her arms around me. And I shall trust her
then.

Gerald Gould

BY THE NORTH SEA

A LAND that is lonelier than ruin;
A sea that is stranger than death:
Far fields that a rose never blew in,
Wan waste where the winds lack breath;

Full Fathom Five

Waste endless and boundless and flowerless
But of marsh-blossoms fruitless as free:
Where earth lies exhausted, as powerless
To strive with the sea.

Far flickers the flight of the swallows,
Far flutters the weft of the grass
Spun dense over desolate hollows
More pale than the clouds as they pass:
Thick woven as the weft of a witch is
Round the heart of a thrall that hath sinned,
Whose youth and the wrecks of its riches
Are waifs on the wind.

The pastures are herdless and sheepless,
No pasture or shelter for herds:
The wind is relentless and sleepless,
And restless and songless the birds;
Their cries from afar fall breathless,
Their wings are as lightnings that flee;
For the land has two lords that are deathless:
Death's self and the sea.

These twain, as a king with his fellow,
Hold converse of desolate speech:
And her waters are haggard and yellow
And crass with the scurf of the beach:
And his garments are grey as the hoary
Wan sky where the day lies dim;
And his power is to her, and his glory,
As hers unto him.

The Call of the Sea

In the pride of his power she rejoices,
In her glory he glows and is glad:
In her darkness the sound of his voice is,
With his breath she dilates and is mad:
“If thou slay me, O death, and outlive me,
Yet thy love hath fulfilled me of thee.”
“Shall I give thee not back if thou give me,
O sister, O sea?”

And year upon year dawns living,
And age upon age drops dead:
And his hand is not weary of giving,
And the thirst of her heart is not fed:
And the hunger that moans in her passion,
And the rage in her hunger that roars
As a wolf that the winter lays lash on,
Still calls and implores.

Her walls have no granite for girder,
No fortalice fronting her stands:
But reefs the bloodguiltiest of murder
Are less than the banks of her sands:
These number their slain by the thousand;
For the ship hath no surety to be,
When the bank is abreast of her bows and
Aflush with the sea.

No surety to stand, and no shelter
To dawn out of darkness but one,
Out of waters that hurtle and welter
No succour to dawn with the sun,

Full Fathom Five

But a rest from the wind as it passes,
Where, hardly redeemed from the waves,
Lie thick as the blades of the grasses
The dead in their graves.

A multitude noteless of numbers,
As wild weeds cast on a heap:
And sounder than sleep are their slumbers,
And softer than song is their sleep;
And sweeter than all things and stranger
The sense, if perchance it may be,
That the wind is divested of danger
And scatheless the sea.

That the roar of the banks they breasted
Is hurtless as bellowing of herds,
And the strength of his wings that invested
The wind, as the strength of a bird's;
As the seamew's might or the swallow's
That cry to him back if he cries,
As over the graves and their hollows
Days darken and rise.

As the souls of the dead men disburdened
And clean of the sins they have sinned,
With a lovelier than man's life guerdoned
And delight as a wave's in the wind,
And delight as the wind's in the billow,
Birds pass, and deride with their glee
The flesh that has dust for its pillow
As wrecks have the sea.

The Call of the Sea

When the ways of the sun wax dimmer,
Wings flash through the dusk like beams;
And the clouds in the lit sky glimmer,
The bird in the graveyard gleams;
As the cloud at its wing's edge whitens
When the clarions of sunrise are heard,
The graves that the bird's note brightens
Grow bright for the bird.

As the waves of the numberless waters
That the winds cannot number who guides
Are the sons of the shore and the daughters
Here lulled by the chime of the tide:
And here in the press of them standing
We know not if these or if we
Live truliest, or anchored to landing
Or drifted to sea.

In the valley he named of decision
No denser were multitudes met
When the soul of the seer in her vision
Saw nations for doom of them set;
Saw darkness in dawn, and the splendour
Of judgment, the sword and the rod;
But the doom here of death is more tender
And gentler the god.

And gentler the wind from the dreary
Sea-banks by the waves overlapped,
Being weary, speaks peace to the weary
From slopes that the tide-stream hath sapped;

Full Fathom Five

And sweeter than all that we call so
The seal of their slumber shall be
Till the graves that embosom them also
Be sapped of the sea.

Algernon Charles Swinburne.

THE LURE OF THE SEA

OF all the objects I have ever seen, there is none which affects my imagination so much as the Sea, or Ocean. I cannot see the heavings of this prodigious bulk of waters, even in a calm, without a very pleasing astonishment; but when it is worked up in a tempest, so that the horizon on every side is nothing but foaming billows and floating mountains, it is impossible to describe the agreeable horror that rises from such a prospect. A troubled ocean to a man who sails upon it, is, I think, the biggest object that he can see in motion, and consequently gives his imagination one of the highest kinds of pleasure that can arise from Greatness.

Joseph Addison.

OCEANUS

WHILE still the dusk impends above the glimmering waste
A tremour comes: wave after wave turns
silvery bright:

The Call of the Sea

A sudden yellow gleam athwart the east is traced:
The waning stars fade forth, swift perishing pyres.
The moon lies pearly wan upon the front of Night.
Then all at once upwells a flood of golden light
And a myriad waves flash forth a myriad fires:
Now is the hour the amplest glory of life to taste,
Outswimming towards the sun upon the billowy
waste.

.

On the wide wastes she lives her lawless, passionate
life:

Enslaved of none, the imperious mighty Sea!
How glorious the music of her waves at strife
With all the winds of heaven that, fiercely wooing,
blow!

On high she ever chants her psalm of Victory;
Afar her turbulent pæan tells that she is free:
The tireless albatross with wings like foam or snow
Flies leagues on leagues for days, and yet the world
seems rife
With nought save windy waves and the Sea's wild
free life!

.

Vast, vast, immeasurably vast, thy dreadful peace
When heaving with slow, mighty breath thou liest
In utter rest, and dost thy ministering winds release
So that with folded wings they too subside,
Floating through hollow spaces, though the highest

Full Fathom Five

Stirs his long tremulous pinions when thou sighest!
Then in thy soul, that doth in fathomless depths
abide,

All wild desires and turbulent longings cease—
Profound, immeasurable then, thy dreadful peace!

But in thy noon of night, serene as death, when under
The terrible silence of that archèd dome
Not a lost whisper ev'n of thy wandering thunder
Ascends like the spiral smoke of perishing flame,
Nor dying wave on thy swart bosom sinks in
foam—

Then, then the world is thine, thy heritage, thy
home!

What then for thee, O Sea, thou Terror! or what
name

To call thee by, thou Sphinx, thou Mystery, thou
Wonder—

Above thou art Living Death, Oblivion under!

William Sharp.

LES SILHOUETTES

THE sea is flected with bars of grey,
The dull dead wind is out of tune,
And like a withered leaf the moon
Is blown across the stormy bay.

The Call of the Sea

Etched clear upon the pallid sand
The black boat lies: a sailor boy
Clambers aboard in careless joy
With laughing face and gleaming hand.

And overhead the curlews cry,
Where through the dusky upland grass
The young brown-throated reapers pass,
Like silhouettes against the sky.

Oscar Wilde.

THE MIDNIGHT OCEAN

IT is the midnight hour:—the beauteous sea,
Calm as the cloudless heaven, the heaven discloses,
While many a sparkling star, in quiet glee,
Far down within the watery sky reposes.
As if the Ocean's heart were stirr'd
With inward life, a sound is heard,
Like that of dreamer murmuring in his sleep;
'Tis partly the billow, and partly the air,
That lies like a garment floating fair
Above the happy deep.
The sea, I ween, cannot be fann'd
By evening freshness from the land,
For the land it is far away;
But God hath will'd that the sky-born breeze
In the centre of the loneliest seas
Should ever sport and play.

Full Fathom Five

The mighty Moon she sits above,
Encircled with a zone of love,
A zone of dim and tender light
That makes her wakeful eyes more bright:
She seems to shine with a sunny ray,
And the night looks like a mellow'd day!
The gracious Mistress of the Main
Hath now an undisturbed reign,
And from her silent throne looks down,
As upon children of her own,
On the waves that lend their gentle breast
In gladness for her couch of rest!

John Wilson ("Christopher North").

THE INSPIRATION OF THE SEA

HE who first perils his existence on this mighty and immense mass of water . . . experiences a solemn feeling of awe, of wonder—nay, oftentimes of fear. And yet, lost in the very magnificence of this image of eternity—this throne of the Invisible, man feels himself a prouder being, in the knowledge that the science of his fellow-creatures has taught him to explore its wondrous depths,—to steer uninjured by rocks or islands through its pathless desert, and to draw a higher and a better notion of the glory and divinity of his Maker by the never-ending wonders which are presented to him. The poor in pocket and in mind, condemned from youth

The Call of the Sea

to age to toil, perhaps in the darkness of a mine excavating the ore, and returning when oppressed with fatigue to the shed which serves him with a shelter: the mechanic, who from daylight to dark continues his labour in one city; the husbandman, who ploughs the field and sows the seed, who reaps the harvest and who stacks the hay,—can never have that exalted notion of man, and of man's works, as he whose whole life is one scene of continued change; who is associated to-day with the dark, sully negro of the Gold Coast,—with the gay Frenchman to-morrow; who sees the pigmy race of Mexico or the giants of Patagonia,—much less can he form a just estimate of the power of the Divinity. The wonders of creation are to be seen in the ocean, and in the stupendous mountains of the Andes, or the still prouder Himalayas. It is in sights like these that man is convinced of his own insignificance, and yet of his own power: it is when standing on the Andes, and seeing a city like a speck, that he feels his vast inferiority. But he becomes conscious of the greatness of his intellect when he measures the heights above him with mathematical exactness, or looks for the moment—the well-calculated moment, when a comet shall return and be visible. Oh! the delight—the calm delight of pondering on such sublimity, supported by the still ocean! when the mind, in harmony with the scene, calmly surveys the greatness of the works of God.

Captain Chamier.

Full Fathom Five

APOSTROPHE TO THE OCEAN

ROLL on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore; upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth:—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the falls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

The Call of the Sea

Thy shores are empires changed in all but thee—
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters wash'd them power while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou;—
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
Time writes no wrinkles on thine azure brow—
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of Eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep were made: each zone
Obeys thee: thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy breakers, onward; from a boy
I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And I trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

Lord Byron.

Full Fathom Five

THE WORLD BELOW THE BRINE

THE world below the brine,
Forests at the bottom of the sea, the branches
and leaves,
Sea-lettuce, vast lichens, strange flowers and seeds,
the thick tangle, openings, and pink turf,
Different colours, pale gray and green, purple, white,
and gold, the play of light through the
water,
Dumb swimmers there among the rocks, coral, glu-
ten, grass, rushes—and the aliment of the
swimmers,
Sluggish existences grazing there, suspended, or
slowly crawling close to the bottom,
The sperm-whale at the surface blowing air and
spray, or disporting with his flukes,
The leaden-eyed shark, the walrus, the turtle, the
hairy sea-leopard, and the sting-ray,
Passions there, wars, pursuits, tribes, sight in those
ocean-depths, breathing that thick-breath-
ing air, as so many do,
The changes thence to the sight here, and to the
subtle air breathed by beings like us who
walk this sphere,
The changes onward from ours to that of beings
who walk other spheres.

Walt Whitman.

The Call of the Sea

BY THE SEA

WHY does the sea moan evermore?
Shut out from heaven it makes its moan,
It frets against the boundary shore;
All earth's full rivers cannot fill
The sea, that drinking thirsteth still.

Sheer miracle of loveliness
Lie hid in its unlooked-on bed:
Anemones, salt, passionless,
Blow flower-like; just enough alive
To blow and multiply and thrive.

Shells quaint with curve, or spot, or spike,
Encrusted live things argus-eyed,
All fair alike, yet all unlike,
Are born without a pang, and die
Without a pang, and so pass by.

Christina G. Rossetti.

ON RE-VISITING THE SEA-SHORE,
AFTER LONG ABSENCE

UNDER STRONG MEDICAL RECOMMENDATION NOT
TO BATHE

GOD be with thee, gladsome Ocean!
How gladly greet I thee once more!
Ships and waves, and ceaseless motion,
And men rejoicing on thy shore.

Full Fathom Five

Dissuading spake the mild Physician,
 "Those briny waves for thee are Death!"
But my soul fulfilled her mission,
 And lo! I breathe untroubled breath!

FASHION's pining Sons and Daughters,
 That seek the crowd they seem to fly,
Trembling they approach thy waters;
 And what cares Nature, if they die?

Me a thousand hopes and pleasures,
 A thousand recollections bland,
Thoughts sublime and stately measures,
 Revisit in thy echoing strand:

Dreams (the Soul herself forsaking),
 Tearful raptures, boyish mirth;
Silent adorations, making
 A blessed shadow of this Earth!

On ye hopes, that stir within me,
 Health comes with you from above!
God is with me, God is in me!
 I cannot die, if Life be Love.

S. T. Coleridge.

The Call of the Sea

HOW DEAR TO ME THE HOUR

HOW dear to me the hour when daylight dies,
And sunbeams melt along the silent sea;
For then sweet dreams of other days arise,
And memory breathes her vesper sigh to thee.

And, as I watch the line of light, that plays
Along the smooth wave t'wards the burning west,
I long to tread that golden path of rays,
And think 'twould lead to some bright isle of rest.
Thomas Moore.

O SEA!

HERE in the teeming city lo! I cry
Towards the wide waste of waters: give to me
Harbour of wind and light whereto to fly,
O Sea!

Let all men know that though the world's harps
choose
Full many flower-crowned loves, and bow the
knee,
I am thy singer,—whom thy breath renews,
O Sea!

Here in our England I am far apart
From minds of men who know not aught of thee;
I am repaid if but I win thy heart,
O Sea!

Full Fathom Five

Oh, what are flowers or ferns or blue-waved rills
Or ornate valleys haunted by the bee
Beside thy flowerless gulfs and foam-flecked hills,
O Sea!

Thou art eternal as the human race;—
Ere fair earth heard one lover's passionate plea
Thou and the lonely sun stood face to face,
O Sea!

Thou sawest pale Cleopatra's galleys ride
Upon the blood-splashed deep;—beheld'st when
we,
Conquerors, saw Nelson kiss death's lips for bride,
O Sea!

At Marathon thou watched'st the fierce hosts
Collide in battle: far from rose or tree,
Thou communest with the pale stars' glimmering
ghosts,
O Sea!

Hear us! Oh pour upon us thy great might,
And clothe us round with thine eternity,
And set upon our brows thy deathless light,
O Sea!

George Barlow.

The Call of the Sea

STORM AND CALM

THE lone House shakes, the wild waves leap
around,
Their sharp mouths foam, their frantic hands
wave high;

I hear around me a sad soul of sound,—
A ceaseless sob,—a melancholy cry.

Above, there is the trouble of the sky.
On either side stretch waters with no bound.

Within, my cheek upon my hand, sit I,
Oft startled by sick faces of the drown'd.

Yet are there golden dawns and glassy days
When the vast Sea is smooth and sunk in rest,
And in the sea the gentle heaven doth gaze,
And, seeing its own beauty, smiles its best;

With nights of peace, when, in a virgin haze,
God's Moon wades thro' the shallows of the West.

Robert Buchanan.

THE SEA—IN CALM

LOOK what immortal floods the sunset pours
Upon us!—Mark how still (as though in
dreams

Round) the once wild and terrible Ocean seems!
How silent are the winds! No billow roars,

Full Fathom Five

But all is tranquil as Elysian shores;
The silver margin which aye runneth round
The moon-enchanted sea hath here no sound:
Even echo speaks not on these radiant moors.
What! is the giant of the ocean dead,
Whose strength was all unmatched beneath the
sun?

No, he reposes. Now his toils are done,
More quiet than the babbling brook is he.
So mightiest powers by deepest calms are fed,
And sleep, how oft, in things that gentlest be.

Bryan Waller Procter ("Barry Cornwall").

THE SEA-DIVER

MY way is on the bright blue sea,
My sleep upon the rocky tide;
And many an eye has followed me,
Where billows clasp the worn sea-side.

My plumage bears the crimson blush,
When ocean by the sun is kissed!
When fades the evening's purple flush,
My dark wing cleaves the silver mist.

Full many a fathom down beneath
The bright arch of the splendid deep,
My ear has heard the sea-shell breathe
O'er living myriads in their sleep.

The Call of the Sea

They rested by the coral throne,
And by the pearly diadem,
Where the pale sea-grape has o'ergrown
The glorious dwelling made for them.

At night, upon my storm-drenched wing,
I poised above a helmless bark,
And soon I saw the shattered thing
Had passed away and left no mark.

And when the wind and storm had done,
A ship, that had rode out the gale,
Sunk down without a signal-gun,
And none was left to tell the tale.

I saw the pomp of day depart—
The cloud resign its golden crown,
When to the ocean's beating heart
The sailor's wasted corpse went down.

Peace be to those whose graves are made
Beneath the bright and silver sea!
Peace that their relics there were laid,
With no vain pride and pageantry.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Full Fathom Five

THE SEA-MEW

HOW joyously the young sea-mew
Lay dreaming on the waters blue,
Whereon our little bark had thrown
A forward shadow, the only one,
(But shadows ever man pursue).

Familiar with the waves and free,
As if their own white foam were he,
His heart, upon the heart of ocean,
Lay learning all its mystic motion,
And throbbing to the throbbing sea.

And such a brightness in his eye,
As if the ocean and the sky
Within him had lit up and nurst
A soul, God gave him not at first,
To comprehend their majesty.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

THE MOON-PATH ON THE SEA

JUST at my feet, where the shore, descending,
Dips to its death in the sea's embrace,
Starts the road which the moon, down-bending,
Straight unwinds (with no sound attending)
Mile on mile o'er the liquid space

The Call of the Sea

I think that the moon felt soft, sweet sorrow,
Watching the sea's black breadth unlit—
Said, "Of my silver thou mayst borrow
Till the new sun brings thee gold to-morrow:
In this molten stream I offer it!"

How the path keeps a rhythmic heaving!
—As though it signalled, that I might see,
"Standest thou there all unbelieving?
Holdest my promise all deceiving?
Canst thou not trust thy steps to me?"

Winsome the call, yet I dare not follow!
What if light's lure be a traitor's kiss?
What if the path that looks firm prove hollow?
Or if, at the end, there waits, to swallow
Hapless trav'lers, a deep abyss?

—Down from the moon's calm, at the moment,
Swift rebuke to my fear inclines!
"How art thou blind to my true bestowment!
How didst mistake what my gleam and glow meant!
Wrongly interpret the pathway's signs!

"What snare do I set, that thou so debatest?
This, by my path's shine, I would show—
How from afar comes a way of the straightest
Right through the gloom as thou, trembling, waitest,
Lone, at dark's edge! Read the lesson so!

Full Fathom Five

“Set thy fancy to sweeter singing!—

Deem thou stand'st where a path from Heav'n
Sweeps to its end at thy feet there, bringing
Some great Presence, with music ringing
Clear as the wheels to their goal are driv'n!”

Moon, thou shalt be of my mood the changer!

I will heed thy plea from the quiet sky,
And, when I touch new paths, a stranger,
Will think no more of dark fate and danger,
But of the Presence that draweth nigh.

Henry W. Clark.

NATURE'S FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

A MORNING SWIM OFF GUERNSEY WITH A FRIEND

AS if the Spring's fresh groves should change and
shake
To dark green woods of Orient terebinth,
Then break to bloom of England's hyacinth,
So 'neath us change the waves, rising to take
Each kiss of colour from each cloud and flake
Round many a rocky hall and labyrinth,
Where sea-wrought column, arch, and granite plinth,
Show how the sea's fine rage dares make and break.
Young with the youth the sea's embrace can lend,
Our glowing limbs, with sun and brine empearled,

The Call of the Sea

Seem born anew, and in your eyes, dear friend,
Rare pictures shine, like fairy flags unfurled—
Of child-land, where the roofs of rainbow bend
Over the magic wonders of the world.

Theodore Watts-Dunton.

SEA-SHORE STANZAS

METHINKS I fain would lie by the lone sea,
And hear the waters their white music weave!
Methinks it were a pleasant thing to grieve,
So that our sorrows might companion'd be
By that strange harmony
Of winds and billows, and the living sound
Sent down from heaven when the thunder speaks
Unto the listening shores and torrent creeks,
When the swollen sea doth strive to burst its bound!

Methinks, when tempests come and kiss the ocean
Until the vast and terrible billows wake,
I see the writhing of that curled snake
Which men of old believed, and my emotion
Warrest within me till the fable reigns
God of my fancy, and my curdling veins
Do homage to that serpent old
Which clasp'd the great world in its fold,
And brooded over earth and the unknown sea,
Like endless, restless, drear eternity.

Bryan Waller Procter ("Barry Cornwall").

Full Fathom Five

THE OCEAN

THE Ocean, at the bidding of the Moon,
For ever changes with his restless tide;
Flung shoreward now, to be regather'd soon
With kingly pauses of reluctant pride,
And semblance of return. Anon from home
He issues forth again, high ridged and free;
The gentlest murmur of his seething foam,
Like armies whispering where great echoes be!
Oh! leave me here upon this beach to rove,
Mute listener to that sound so grand and lone—
A glorious sound, deep-drawn and strongly thrown,
And reaching those on mountain heights above;
To British ears, as who shall scorn to own,
A tutelar fond voice, a saviour-tone of love!

Charles Tennyson Turner.

II
ON THE SHORE

On the Shore

EVENING, BY THE SEA

LIGHT ebbs from off the Earth; the fields are
strange,
Dusk, trackless, tenantless; now the mute sky
Resigns itself to Night and Memory,
And no wind will yon sunken clouds derange,
No glory enrapture them; from cot or grange
The rare voice ceases; one long-breathèd sigh,
And steeped in summer sleep the world must lie;
All things are acquiescing in the change.
Hush! while the vaulted hollow of the night
Deepens, what voice is this the sea sends forth,
Disconsolate iterance, a passionless moan?
Ah! now the Day is gone, and tyrannous Light,
And the calm presence of fruit-bearing Earth:
Cry, Sea! it is thy hour; thou art alone.

Edward Dowden.

BY THE SEA

IT is a beauteous evening, calm and free;
The holy time is quiet as a nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;

The gentleness of heaven is on the Sea:
Listen! the mighty being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.

Full Fathom Five

Dear child! dear girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouch'd by solemn thought
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:

Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year,
And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

William Wordsworth.

DOVER BEACH

THE sea is calm to-night,
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits;—on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Matthew Arnold.

On the Shore

SEA-SIDE ELEGIACS

EVER my heart beateth high and the blood in
me danceth delighted,
When, in the wind on the wharf, keen from
the edge of the land,
Watching the white-wingèd black-bodied ships, as
they rise uninvited
Over the violet-dark wall o' the water, I stand.
Wondrous with life that is in them, aware of the
waters and weathers,
They to the populous port pass with a will of
their own.
Merrily singeth the mariner there, as the cable he
tethers
Tight to the huge iron ring, hung on the green
gluey stone.
Swept with the spray is the pavement above; and
the sea-wind is salt there.
Down on the causeys all day, humming, the
merchants unlade
Marvellous merchandise, while the sea engines of
burthen, at halt there,
Shoulder each other, and loll, lazy in shine or in
shade.
O for the wing o' the grey sea-eagle, that far away
inland
Croucheth in cave or in creek, waiting the wind
on the height!

Full Fathom Five

When night cometh, the great north-wind, blowing
bleak over Finland,

Leapeth, and, lifting aloft, beareth him into the
night.

O for the wing o' the bird! and O for the wind o'
the ocean!

O for the far-away lands! O for the faces un-
found!

Would I were hence! for my spirit is fill'd with a
mighty emotion.

Why must the spirit, though wing'd, thus to the
body be bound?

Ah, but my heart sinketh low, and the rapturous
vein is arrested,

When, at the mid o' the night, high on the
shadowy land,

Mournfully watching the ghost-white waves, livid-
lipp'd, hollow-breasted,

Sob over shingle and shell, here with my sorrow
I stand.

Weary of woe that is in them, fatigued by the violent
weathers,

Feebly they tumble and toss, sadly they murmur
and moan,

Coldly the moon looketh down through the wan-
rolling vapour she gathers

Silently, cloud after cloud, round her companion-
less throne.

Dark up above is the wharf; and the harbour. The
night wind alone there

On the Shore

Goeth about in the night, humming a horrible
song.

Black misshapen bulks, coil'd cumbrous things,
overthrown there,

Seem as, in sullen dismay, silently suffering wrong.

O for the wing o' the grey sea-eagle, roamer of
heaven!

Him doth the wind o' the night bear through the
night on its breast.

Over the howling ocean, and unto his ancient haven,
Far in the land that he loves finding the realms
of his rest.

O for the wing o' the bird! and O for the wind o'
the ocean!

O for the lands that are left! O for the faces of eld!
Would I were hence! for my spirit is fill'd with a
mournful emotion.

Why must the spirit, though wing'd, still by the
body be held?

Lord Lytton ("Owen Meredith").

A SEA-SIDE WALK

WE walked beside the sea,
After a day which perished silently
Of its own glory—like the Princess weird
Who, combating the Genius, scorched and seared,
Uttered with burning breath, "Ho! victory!"
And sank adown, an heap of ashes pale;
So runs the Arab tale.

Full Fathom Five

The sky above us showed
An universal and unmoving cloud,
On which the cliffs permitted us to see
Only the outline of their majesty,
As master-minds, when gazed at by the crowd!
And, shining with a gloom, the water grey
Swang in its moon-taught way.

Nor moon nor stars were out.
They did not dare to tread so soon about,
Though trembling, in the footsteps of the sun.
The light was neither night's nor day's, but one
Which, life-like, had a beauty in its doubt;
And Silence's impassioned breathing round
Seemed wandering into sound.

O solemn-beating heart
Of nature! I have knowledge that thou art
Bound unto man's by cords he cannot sever—
And, what time they are slackened by him ever,
So to attest his own supernal part,
Still runneth thy vibration fast and strong,
The slackened cord along.

For though we never spoke
Of the grey water and the shaded rock,—
Dark wave and stone, unconsciously, were fused
Into the plaintive speaking that we used,
Of absent friends, and memories unforsook;
And, had we seen each other's face, we had
Seen haply, each was sad.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

On the Shore

MUSING ON THE ROARING OCEAN

MUSING on the roaring ocean
Which divides my love and me;
Wearying Heaven in warm devotion,
For his weal where'er he be.

Hope and fear's alternate billow
Yielding late to Nature's law,
Whisp'ring spirits round my pillow
Talk of him that's far awa.

Ye whom sorrow never wounded,
Ye who never shed a tear,
Care-untroubled, joy-surrounded,
Gaudy day to you is dear.

Gentle night, do thou befriend me
Downy sleep, the curtain draw;
Spirits kind, again attend me,
Talk of him that's far awa!

Robert Burns.

DOWN ON THE SHORE

DOWN on the shore, on the sunny shore!
Where the salt smell cheers the land;
Where the tide moves bright under boundless
light,
And the surge on the glittering strand;

Full Fathom Five

Where the children wade in the shallow pools,
Or run from the froth in play;
Where the swift little boats with milk-white wings
Are crossing the sapphire bay,
And the ship in full sail, with a fortunate gale,
Holds proudly on her way.
Where the nets are spread on the grass to dry,
And asleep, hard by, the fishermen lie,
Under the tent of the warm blue sky,
With the hushing wave on its golden floor
To sing their lullaby.

Down on the shore, on the stormy shore!
Beset by a growling sea,
Whose mad waves leap on the rocky steep
Like wolves up a traveller's tree.
Where the foam flies wide, and an angry blast
Blows the curlew off, with a screech;
Where the brown sea-wrack, torn up by the roots,
Is flung out of fishes' reach;
Where the tall ship rolls on the hidden shoals,
And scatters her planks on the beach.
Where slate and straw through the village spin,
And a cottage fronts the fiercest din
With a sailor's wife sitting sad within,
Hearkening the wind and water's roar,
Till at last her tears begin.

William Allingham.

On the Shore

THE TIDE RISES, THE TIDE FALLS

THE tide rises, the tide falls,
The twilight darkens, the curlew calls;
Along the sea-sands damp and brown
The traveller hastens towards the town,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

Darkness settles on roofs and walls,
But the sea, the sea in the darkness calls;
The little waves, with their soft, white hands,
Efface the footprints in the sands,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

The morning breaks; the steeds in their stalls
Stamp and neigh, as the hostler calls;
The day returns, but nevermore
Returns the traveller to the shore,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

SEA-SHORE

I HEARD, or seemed to hear the chiding Sea
Say, Pilgrim, why so late and slow to come?
Am I not always here, thy summer home?
Is not my voice thy music, morn and eve?
My breath thy healthful climate in the heats,

Full Fathom Five

My touch thy antidote, my bay thy bath?
Was ever building like my terraces?
Was ever couch magnificent as mine?
Lie on the warm rock-ledges, and there learn
A little hut suffices like a town,
I make your sculptured architecture vain,
Vain beside mine. I drive my wedges home,
And carve the coastwise mountain into caves.
Lo! here is Rome and Nineveh and Thebes,
Karnak and Pyramid and Giant's Stairs
Half piled or prostrate; and my newest slab
Older than all thy race.

Behold the Sea,
The opaline, the plentiful and strong,
Yet beautiful as is the rose in June,
Fresh as the trickling rainbow of July;
Sea full of food, the nourisher of kinds,
Purger of earth, and medicine of men;
Creating a sweet climate by my breath,
Washing out harms and griefs from memory,
And, in my mathematic ebb and flow,
Giving a hint of that which changes not.
Rich are the sea-gods:—who gives gifts but they?
They grope the sea for pearls, but more than pearls:
They pluck Force thence, and give it to the wise.
For every wave is wealth to Dædalus,
Wealth to the cunning artist who can work
Thismatchlessstrength. Whereshall he find, O waves!
A load your Atlas shoulders cannot lift.

On the Shore

I with my hammer pounding evermore
The rocky coast, smite Andes into dust,
Strewing my bed, and, in another age,
Rebuild a continent of better men.
Then I unbar the doors: my paths lead out
The exodus of nations: I disperse
Men to all shores that front the hoary main.

I too have arts and sorceries;
Illusion dwells forever with the wave.
I know what spells are laid. Leave me to deal
With credulous and imaginative man;
For, though he scoop my water in his palm,
A few rods off he deems it gems and clouds.
Planting strange fruits and sunshine on the shore,
I make some coast alluring, some lone isle,
To distant men, who must go there, or die.
Ralph Waldo Emerson.

THE SHORE

CAN it be women that walk in the sea-mist, under
the cliffs there
Which the unsatisfied surge sucks with im-
portunate lip?
There, where out from the sand-chok'd anchors, on
to the skiffs there,
Twinkle the slippery ropes, swinging adip and
adrip?

Full Fathom Five

All the place in a lurid, glimmering, emerald glory,
Glares like a Titan world come back under heaven
again:

Yonder, aloof are the steeps of the sea-kings, famous
in story;

But who are they on the beach? they are neither
women nor men.

Who knows, are they the land's, or the water's, living
creatures?

Born of the boiling sea? nurst in the seething
storms?

With their woman's hair dishevell'd over their stern
male features,

Striding, bare to the knee; magnified maritime
forms!

They may be the mothers and wives, they may be
the sisters and daughters

Of men on the dark mid-seas, alone in those black
coil'd hulls,

That toil 'neath yon white cloud, whence the moon
will rise o'er the waters

To-night, with her face on fire, if the wind in the
evening lulls.

But they may be merely visions, such as only sick
men witness,

(Sitting as I sit here, fill'd with a wild regret),

Framed from the sea's misshapen spume with a
horrible fitness

To the winds in which they walk, and the surges
by which they are wet:—

On the Shore

Salamanders, sea-wolves, witches, warlocks; marine
monsters

Which the dying seaman beholds, when the rats
are swimming away,

And an Indian wind 'gins hiss from an unknown
isle, and along stirs

The broken cloud which burns on the verge of
the dead, red day.

I know not. All my mind is confused; nor can I
dissever

The mould of the visible world from the shape of
my thought in me.

The Inward and Outward are fused: and, through
them, murmur for ever

The sorrow whose sound is the wind, and the
roar of the limitless sea.

Lord Lytton ("Owen Meredith").

ON BEING STRANDED NEAR THE HARBOUR OF BOULOGNE

WHY cast ye back upon the Gallic shore,
Ye furious waves! a patriotic son
Of England—who in hope her coast had
won,

His project crowned, his pleasant travel o'er?
Well—let him pace this noted beach once more,
That gave the Roman his triumphant shells;
That saw the Corsican his cap and bells

Full Fathom Five

Haughtily shake, a dreamy conqueror!
Enough; my country's cliffs I can behold,
And proudly think, beside the murmuring sea,
Of checked ambition, tyranny controlled,
And folly cursed with endless memory:
There local recollection ne'er can cloy
Such ground I from my very heart enjoy.

William Wordsworth.

III
THE DEPARTURE

The Departure

THE SHIP STARTING

LO, the unbounded sea,
On its breast a ship starting, spreading all sails,
carrying even her moon-sails,
The pennant is flying aloft as she speeds so stately
—below emulous waves press forward,
They surround the ship with shining curving motions and foam.

Walt Whitman.

THE SHIP

WHERE lies the land to which yon ship must go?
Festively she puts forth in trim array;
As vigorous as a lark at break of day:
Is she for tropic suns, or polar snow?
What boots the enquiry? Neither friend nor foe
She cares for; let her travel where she may,
She finds familiar names, a beaten way
Ever before her, and a wind to blow.
Yet still I ask, what haven is her mark?
And, almost as it was when ships were rare,
(From time to time, like pilgrims, here and there
Crossing the waters) doubt, and something dark,
Of the old sea some reverential fear,
Is with me at thy farewell, joyous bark.

William Wordsworth.

Full Fathom Five

THE FAREWELL

FAREWELL, farewell! Her vans the vessel tries,
His iron might the potent engine plies:
Haste, winged words, and ere 'tis useless, tell,
Farewell, farewell, yet once again, farewell.

The docks, the streets, the houses past us fly,
Without a strain the great ship marches by:
Ye fleeting banks take up the words we tell,
And say for us yet once again, farewell!

The waters widen—on without a strain
The strong ship moves upon the open main;
She knows the seas, she hears the true waves swell,
She seems to say farewell, again farewell.

The billows whiten and the deep seas heave;
Fly once again, sweet words, to her I leave,
With winds that blow return, and seas that swell,
Farewell, farewell, say once again, farewell.

Fresh in my face and rippling to my feet
The winds and waves an answer soft repeat,
In sweet, sweet words far brought they seem to tell,
Farewell, farewell, yet once again, farewell.

Night gathers fast; adieu, thou fading shore!
The land we look for next must lie before;
Hence, foolish tears! weak thoughts, no more rebel,
Farewell, farewell, a last, a last farewell.

The Departure

Yet not, indeed, ah not till more than sea
And more than space divide my love and me.
Till more than waves and winds between us swell,
Farewell, a last, indeed, a last farewell.

Arthur Hugh Clough.

GOING AWAY

WE are made fast alongside the packet, whose huge red funnel is smoking bravely, giving rich promise of serious intentions. Packing-cases, portmanteaus, carpet bags, and boxes, are already passed from hand to hand, and hauled on board with breathless rapidity. The officers, smartly dressed, are at the gangway handing the passengers up the side, and hurrying the men. In five minutes' time, the little steamer is utterly deserted, and the packet is beset and over-run by its late freight, who instantly pervade the whole ship, and are to be met with by the dozen in every nook and corner: swarming down below with their own baggage, and stumbling over other people's; disposing themselves comfortably in wrong cabins, and creating a most horrible confusion by having to turn out again; madly bent upon opening locked doors, and on forcing a passage into all kinds of out-of-the-way places where there is no thoroughfare, sending wild stewards, with elfin hair, to and fro upon the breezy decks on unintelligible errands, impossible of execu-

Full Fathom Five

tion: and in short, creating the most extraordinary and bewildering tumult. In the midst of all this, the lazy gentleman, who seems to have no luggage of any kind—not so much as a friend even—lounges up and down the hurricane-deck, coolly puffing a cigar; and, as this unconcerned demeanour again exalts him in the opinion of those who have leisure to observe his proceedings, every time he looks up at the masts, or down at the decks, or over the side, they look there too, as wondering whether he sees anything wrong anywhere, and hoping that, in case he should, he will have the goodness to mention it.

What have we here? The captain's boat! and yonder the captain himself. Now, by all our hopes and wishes, the very man he ought to be! A well-made, tight-built, dapper little fellow; with a ruddy face, which is a letter of invitation to shake him by both hands at once; and with a clear blue honest eye, that it does one good to see one's sparkling image in. "Ring the bell!" "Ding, ding, ding!" the very bell is in a hurry. "Now for the shore—who's for the shore?"—"These gentlemen, I am sorry to say." They are away, and never said Good b'ye. Ah! now they wave it from the little boat. "Good b'ye! Good b'ye!" Three cheers from them; three more from us; three more from them: and they are gone.

To and fro, to and fro, to and fro again a hundred times! This waiting for the latest mail-bags is worse than all. If we could have gone off in the midst of

The Departure

that last burst, we should have started triumphantly: but to lie here, two hours and more, in the damp fog, neither staying at home nor going abroad, is letting one gradually down into the very depths of dulness and low spirits. A speck in the mist, at last! That's something. It is the boat we wait for! That's more to the purpose. The captain appears on the paddle-box with his speaking-trumpet; the officers take their stations; all hands are on the alert; the flagging hopes of the passengers revive; the cooks pause in their savoury work, and look out with faces full of interest. The boat comes alongside; the bags are dragged in anyhow, and flung down for the moment anywhere. Three cheers more: and as the first one rings upon our ears, the vessel throbs like a strong giant that has just received the breath of life; the two great wheels turn fiercely round for the first time; and the noble ship, with wind and tide astern, breaks proudly through the lashed and foaming water.

Charles Dickens.

BLACK-EYED SUSAN

ALL in the Downs the fleet was moor'd,
The streamers waving in the wind,
When black-eyed Susan came aboard;
"O! where shall I my true-love find?
Tell me, ye jovial sailors, tell me true
If my sweet William sails among the crew?"

Full Fathom Five

William, who high upon the yard

Rock'd with the billow to and fro,
Soon as her well-known voice he heard

He sigh'd, and cast his eyes below:
The cord slides swiftly through his glowing hands,
And quick as lightning on the deck he stands.

So the sweet lark, high poised in air,

Shuts close his pinions to his breast
If chance his mate's shrill call he hear,

And drops at once into her nest:—
The noblest captain in the British fleet
Might envy William's lips those kisses sweet.

“ O Susan, Susan, lovely dear,

My vows shall ever true remain;
Let me kiss off that falling tear;

We only part to meet again.
Change as ye list, ye winds; my heart shall be
The faithful compass that still points to thee.

“ Believe not what the landsmen say

Who tempt with doubts thy constant mind:
They'll tell thee, sailors, when away,

In every port a mistress find:
Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee so,
For Thou art present wheresoe'er I go.

“ If to fair India's coast we sail,

Thy eyes are seen in diamonds bright,
Thy breath is Afric's spicy gale,
Thy skin is ivory so white.

The Departure

Thus every beauteous object that I view
Wakes in my soul some charm of lovely Sue.

“Though battle call me from thy arms
Let not my pretty Susan mourn;
Though cannons roar, yet safe from harms
William shall to his Dear return.
Love turns aside the balls that round me fly,
Lest precious tears should drop from Susan’s eye.”

The boatswain gave the dreadful word,
The sails their swelling bosom spread,
No longer must she stay aboard;
They kiss’d, she sigh’d, he hung his head.
Her lessening boat unwilling rode to land;
“Adieu!” she cried; and waved her lily hand.
John Gay.

SONG FROM THE SHIP

TO sea, to sea! The calm is o’er;
The wanton water leaps in sport,
And rattles down the pebbly shore;
The dolphin wheels, the sea-cows snort,
And unseen Mermaids’ pearly song
Comes bubbling up, the weeds among.
Fling broad the sail, dip deep the oar:
To sea, to sea! the calm is o’er.

Full Fathom Five

To sea, to sea! our wide-winged bark
Shall billowy cleave its sunny way,
And with its shadow, fleet and dark,
Break the caved Tritons' azure day,
Like mighty eagle soaring light
O'er antelopes on Alpine height.
The anchor heaves, the ship swings free,
The sail swells full. To sea, to sea!

Thomas Lovell Beddoes.

THE VOYAGE

WE left behind the painted buoy
That tosses at the harbour-mouth;
And madly danced our hearts with joy,
As fast we fled to the South:
How fresh was every sight and sound
On open main or winding shore!
We knew the merry world was round,
And we might sail for evermore.

Warm broke the breeze against the brow,
Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail:
The Lady's-head upon the prow
Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd the gale.
The broad seas swell'd to meet the keel,
And swept behind; so quick the run,
We felt the good ship shake and reel,
We seem'd to sail into the Sun.

Lord Tennyson.

IV

THE LIGHTHOUSE

The Lighthouse

THE LIGHTHOUSE

THE plunging storm flies fierce against the pane,
And thrills our cottage with redoubled shocks;
The chimney mutters and the rafters strain;
Without, the breakers roar along the rocks.

See, from our fire and taper-lighted room,
How savage, pitiless, and uncontroll'd
The grim horizon shows its tossing gloom
Of waves from unknown angry gulfs uproll'd;

Where, underneath that black portentous lid,
A long pale space between the night and sea
Gleams awful; while in deepest darkness hid
All other things in our despair agree.

But lo! what star amid the thickest dark
A soft and unexpected dawn has made?
O welcome Lighthouse, thy unruffled spark,
Piercing the turmoil and the deathly shade!

By such a glimpse o'er the distracted wave
Full many a soul is re-possest
Of courage and of order, strong to save;
And like effect it works within my breast.

Three faithful men have set themselves to stand
Against all storms that from the sky can blow,
Where peril must expect no aiding hand,
And tedium no relief may hope to know.

Full Fathom Five

Nor shout they, passing brothers to inform
What weariness they feel, or what affright;
But tranquilly in solitude and storm
Abide from month to month, and show their light.
William Allingham.

THE LIGHTHOUSE

THE rocky ledge runs far into the sea,
And on its outer point, some miles away,
The Lighthouse lifts its massive masonry,
A pillar of fire by night, of cloud by day.

Even at this distance I can see the tides,
Upheaving, break unheard along its base,
A speechless wrath, that rises and subsides
In the white lip and tremor of the face.

And as the evening darkens, lo! how bright,
Through the deep purple of the twilight air,
Beams forth the sudden radiance of its light
With strange, unearthly splendour in its glare!

Not one alone; from each projecting cape
And perilous reef along the ocean's verge,
Starts into life a dim, gigantic shape,
Holding its lantern o'er the restless surge.

Like the great giant Christopher, it stands
Upon the brink of the tempestuous wave,
Wading far out among the rocks and sands,
The night-o'ertaken mariner to save.

The Lighthouse

And the great ships sail outward and return,
 Bending and bowing o'er the billowy swells,
And ever joyful, as they see it burn,
 They wave their silent welcomes and farewells.

They come forth from the darkness, and their sails
 Gleam for a moment only in the blaze,
And eager faces, as the light unveils,
 Gaze at the tower, and vanish while they gaze.

The mariner remembers when a child,
 On his first voyage, he saw it fade and sink;
And when, returning from adventures wild,
 He saw it rise again o'er ocean's brink.

Steadfast, serene, immovable, the same
 Year after year, through all the silent night,
Burns on for evermore that quenchless flame,
 Shines on that inextinguishable light.

It sees the ocean to its bosom clasp
 The rocks and sea-sand with the kiss of peace;
It sees the wild winds lift it in their grasp,
 And hold it up, and shake it like a fleece.

The startled waves leap over it; the storm
 Smites it with all the scourges of the rain,
And steadily against its solid form
 Press the great shoulders of the hurricane.

Full Fathom Five

The sea-bird wheeling round it, with the din
Of wings and winds and solitary cries,
Blended and maddened by the light within,
Dashes himself against the glare, and dies.

A new Prometheus, chained upon the rock,
Still grasping in his hand the fire of Jove,
It does not hear the cry, nor heed the shock,
But hails the mariner with words of love.

“Sail on!” it says, “sail on, ye stately ships!
And with your floating bridge the ocean span;
Be mine to guard this light from all eclipse,
Be yours to bring man nearer unto man!”

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

THE GIRL OF THE CASQUETTE LIGHTHOUSE

AMID the Channel's wiles and deep decoys
Where yonder Beacons watch the siren-sea,
A girl was reared who knew nor flower nor tree
Nor breath of grass at dawn, yet had high joys;
The moving lawns whose verdure never cloys
Were hers. At last she sailed to Alderney,
But there she pined. “The bustling world,” said
she,
“Is all too full of trouble, full of noise.”

The Lighthouse

The storm-child fainting for her home the storm
Had winds for sponsors—one proud rock for nurse,
Whose granite arms, through countless years, dis-
perse

All billowy squadrons tide and wind can form:
The cold bright sea was hers for universe
Till o'er the waves Love flew and fanned them
warm.

But Love brings Fear with eyes of augury:—
Her lover's boat was out; her ears were dinned
With sea-sobs warning of the awakened wind
That shook the troubled sea's red canopy.
Even while she prayed the storm's high revelry
Woke petrel, gull—all revellers winged and finned—
And clutch'd a sail brown-patched and weather-
thinned,

And then a swimmer fought a white wild sea.
“My songs are louder, child, than prayers of
thine”

The Mother sang. “Thy sea-boy waged no strife
With Hatred's poison, gangrened Envy's knife—
With me he strove, in deadly sport divine,
Who lend to men, to gods, an hour of life,
Then give them sleep within these arms of mine!”

Theodore Watts-Dunton.

V
EN VOYAGE

En Voyage

A STARRY NIGHT AT SEA

IF heaven's bright halls are very far from the sea,
I dread a pang the angels could not 'suage:
The imprisoned seabird knows, and only he,
How drear, how dark, may be the proudest cage.
Outside the bars he sees a prison still:
The self-same wood or mead or silver stream
That lends the captive lark a joyous thrill
Is landscape in the seabird's prison-dream:
So might I pine on yonder starry floor
For sea-wind, deaf to all the singing spheres;
Billows like these, that never knew a shore,
Might mock mine eyes and tease my hungry ears;
No scent of amaranth, moly, or asphodel,
In lands that bloom above yon glittering vault,
Could soothe me if I lost this briny smell
This living breath of Ocean sharp and salt.

Theodore Watts-Dunton.

OFF THE COAST

AT night the headlands retreated, the bays advanced into one unbroken line of gloom. The lights of the earth mingled with the lights of heaven; and above the tossing lanterns of a trawling fleet a great lighthouse shone steadily, such as an enormous riding light burning above a vessel of fabulous dimensions. Below its steady glow, the coast, stretching away straight and black, resembled

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the high side of an indestructible craft riding motionless upon the immortal and unresting sea. The dark land lay alone in the midst of waters, like a mighty ship bestarred with vigilant lights—a ship carrying the burden of millions of lives—a ship freighted with dress and with jewels, with gold and with steel. She towered up immense and strong, guarding priceless traditions and untold suffering, sheltering glorious memories and base forgetfulness ignoble virtues and splendid transgressions. A great ship! For ages had the ocean in vain battered her enduring sides; she was there when the world was vaster and darker, when the sea was great and mysterious, and ready to surrender the prize of fame to audacious men. A ship mother of fleets and nations! The great flagship of the race; stronger than the storms! and anchored in the open sea.

Joseph Conrad.

ISOLATION

IN travelling by land, there is a continuity of scene, and a connective succession of persons and incidents, that carry on the story of life, and lessen the effect of absence and separation. We drag, it is true, “a lengthening chain” at each remove of our pilgrimage; but the chain is unbroken: we can trace it back link by link, and we feel that the last still grapples us to home. But a wide sea

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voyage severs us at once. It makes us conscious of being cast loose from the secure anchorage of settled life, and sent adrift upon a doubtful world. It interposes a gulf, not merely imaginary, but real, between us and our homes—a gulf subject to tempest, and fear, and uncertainty, rendering distance palpable, and return precarious.

Washington Irving.

CROSSING BROOKLYN FERRY

I TOO saw the reflection of the summer sky in
the water,
Had my eyes dazzled by the shimmering track
of beams,
Looked at the fine centrifugal spokes of light round
the shape of my head in the sun-lit water,
Looked on the haze on the hills southward and
south-westward,
Looked on the vapour as it flew in fleeces tinged
with violet,
Looked towards the lower bay to notice the arriving
ships,
Saw their approach, saw aboard those that were
near me,
Saw the white sails of schooners and sloops, saw the
ship at anchor,
The sailors at work in the rigging, or out astride
the spars,

Full Fathom Five

The round masts, the swinging motion of the hulls,
the slender serpentine pennants,
The large and small steamers in motion, the pilots
in their pilot-houses,
The white wake left by the passage, the quick
tremulous whirl of the wheels,
The flags of all nations, the falling of them at sunset,
The scallop-edged waves in the twilight, the ladled
cups, the frolicsome crests and glistening,
The stretch afar growing dimmer and dimmer, the
grey walls of the granite store-houses by the
docks,
On the river the shadowy group, the big steam-tug
closely flanked on each side by the barges—
the hay-boat, the belated lighter,
On the neighbouring shore, the fires from the
foundry chimneys burning high and glar-
ingly into the night,
Casting their flicker of black, contrasted with wild
red and yellow light, over the tops of houses
and down into the cleft of streets.

Walt Whitman.

IN THE CROW'S NEST

SWINGING through the clear sky, one hundred
feet above the little stretch of white deck that
looks so strangely narrow and circumscribed,
the period of two hours assigned for a spell is often
spent in strange meditations. For all the circum-

En Voyage

stances are favourable to absolute detachment from ordinary affairs. A man feels there cut off from the world, a temporary visitor to a higher sphere, from whose serene altitude the petty environment of daily life appears separated by a vast gulf. Rising to that calm plane in the shimmering pearly twilight of a tropical dawn, he is enabled to view, as from no other standpoint, the daily mystery and miracle of the sunrise. For he forgets the tiny microcosm below, involuntarily looking upward into the infinite azure until his mind becomes consciously akin to eternal verities, and sheds for a brief space the gross hamperings of fleshly needs and longings. At such a time, especially if the heavens be one stainless concave of blue, the advent of the new day is so overwhelming in its glory that the soul is flooded with a sense of celestial beauty unutterable. Beautiful and glorious indeed are the changing tints and varying hues of early dawn upon the fleecy fields of cloud, but the very changeableness of the wondrous scene is unfavourable to the simple settlement of wondering, worshipping thought induced by the birth of unclouded light. At first there appears upon the eastern edge of the vast, sharply-defined circle of the horizon, that by a familiar optical illusion seems to bound a sapphire concavity of which the spectator is the centre, a tremulous, silky paling of the tender blue belonging to the tropical night. The glowing stars grow fainter, dimmer, ceasing to coruscate like celestial jewels studding the soft, dark

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canopy of the sky. Unlingering, the palpitating sheen spreads zenithwards, presently sending before it as heralds wide bars of radiance tinted with blends of colour not to be reproduced by the utmost skill of the painter. Before their triumphal advent the great cone of the zodiacal light, which, like a stupendous obelisk rising from the mere shadow of some ineffable central glow, to which the gigantic sun itself is but a pale star, has dominated the moonless hours, fades and vanishes. Far reaching, these heavenly messengers gild the western horizon, but when the eye returns to their source it has become "a sea of glass mingled with fire,"—a fire which consumes not, and, while glowing with unfathomable splendour, has yet a mildness that permits the eye to reach its innermost glories unfalteringly and with inexpressible delight.

F. T. Bullen.

AT SEA

TANGLED and torn, the white sea-laces
 Broider the breast of the Indian deep:
 Lifted aloft the strong screw races
 To slacken and strain in the waves which leap:
The great sails swell: the broad bows shiver
 To green and silver the purple sea;
And, down from the sunset, a dancing river
 Flows, broken gold, where our ship goes free.

Sir Edwin Arnold.

En Voyage

NIGHT ON BOARD

TO one unaccustomed to such scenes, this is a very striking time on shipboard. Afterwards, and when its novelty had long worn off, it never ceased to have a peculiar interest and charm for me. The gloom through which the great black mass holds its direct and certain course; the rushing water, plainly heard, but dimly seen; the broad, white, glistening track, that follows in the vessel's wake; the men on the look-out forward, who would be scarcely visible against the dark sky, but for their blotting out some score of glistening stars; the helmsman at the wheel, with the illuminated card before him, shining, a speck of light amidst the darkness, like something sentient and of Divine intelligence; the melancholy sighing of the wind through block, and rope, and chain; the gleaming forth of light from every crevice, nook, and tiny piece of glass about the decks, as though the ship were filled with fire in hiding, ready to burst through any outlet, wild with its resistless power of death and ruin. At first, too, and even when the hour, and all the objects it exalts, have come to be familiar, it is difficult, alone and thoughtful, to hold them to their proper shapes and forms. They change with the wandering fancy; assume the semblance of things left far away; put on the well-remembered aspect of favourite places dearly loved; and even people them with shadows. Streets, houses, rooms; figures

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so like their usual occupants, that they have startled me by their reality, which far exceeded, as it seemed to me, all power of mine to conjure up the absent; have, many and many a time, at such an hour, grown suddenly out of objects with whose real look, and use, and purpose, I was as well acquainted as with my own two hands.

Charles Dickens.

THE JOY OF TRAVELLING

THE sun brought all the sick people out of their berths this morning, and the indescribable moans and noises which had been issuing from behind the fine painted doors on each side of the cabin happily ceased. Long before sunrise, I had the good fortune to discover that it was no longer necessary to maintain the horizontal posture, and, the very instant this truth was apparent, came on deck, at two o'clock in the morning, to see a noble full moon sinking westward, and millions of the most brilliant stars shining overhead. The night was so serenely pure, that you saw them in magnificent airy perspective: the blue sky around and over them, and other more distant orbs sparkling above; till they glittered away faintly into the immeasurable distance. The ship went rolling over a heavy, sweltering, calm sea. The breeze was a warm and soft one; quite different to the rigid air we had left

En Voyage

behind us, two days since, off the Isle of Wight. The bell kept tolling its half-hours, and the mate explained the mystery of watch and dog-watch.

The sight of that noble scene cured all the woes and discomfortures of sea-sickness at once, and if there were any need to communicate such secrets to the public, one might tell of much more good that the pleasant morning-watch effected; but there are a set of emotions about which a man had best be shy of talking lightly,—and the feelings excited by contemplating this vast, magnificent, harmonious Nature are among these. The view of it inspires a delight and ecstasy that is not only hard to describe, but which has something secret in it that a man should not utter loudly. Hope, memory, humility, tender yearnings towards dear friends, and inexpressible love and reverence towards the Power which created the infinite universe blazing above eternally, and the vast ocean shining and rolling around—fill the heart with a solemn, humble happiness, that a person dwelling in a city has rarely occasion to enjoy. They are coming away from London parties at this time: the dear little eyes are closed in sleep under mother's wing. How far off city cares and pleasures appear to be! how small and mean they seem, dwindling out of sight before this magnificent brightness of Nature! But the best thoughts grow and strengthen under it. Heaven shines above, and the humbled spirit looks up reverently towards that boundless aspect of wisdom

Full Fathom Five

and beauty. You are at home, and with all at rest there, however far away they may be; and through the distance the heart broods over them, bright and wakeful like yonder peaceful stars overhead.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

OCEAN LIGHTS

THE helm, to his strong arm consign'd,
Gave the reef'd sail to meet the wind,
And on her alter'd way,
Fierce bounding, forward sprung the ship,
Like greyhound starting from the slip
To seize his flying prey.
Awaked before the rushing prow,
The mimic fires of ocean glow,
Those lightnings of the wave;
Wild sparkles crest the broken tides,
And, flashing round, the vessel's sides
With elvish lustre lave,
While, far behind, their livid light
To the dark billows of the night
A gloomy splendour gave,
It seems as if old ocean shakes
From his dark brow the lucid flakes
In envious pageantry,
To match the meteor-light that streaks
Green Hecla's midnight sky.

En Voyage

Nor lack'd they steadier light to keep
Their course upon the darken'd deep;—
Artornish, on her frowning steep
 'Twixt cloud and ocean hung,
Glanced with a thousand lights of glee
And landward far, and far to sea,
 Her vestal radiance flung.
By that blithe beacon-light they steer'd
 Whose lustre mingled well
With the pale beam that now appear'd,
As the cold moon her head uprear'd
 Above the eastern fell.

Sir Walter Scott.

AFTER THE SEA-SHIP

AFTER the sea-ship, after the whistling winds,
After the white-gray sails taut to their spars
 and ropes,
Below, a myriad myriad waves hastening, lifting up
 their necks,
Tending in ceaseless flow towards the track of the
 ship,
Waves of the ocean bubbling and gurgling, blithely
 prying,
Waves, undulating waves, liquid, uneven, emulous
 waves,
Towards that whirling current, laughing and buoy-
 ant, with curves,

Full Fathom Five

Where the great vessel sailing and tacking displaced
the surface,
Larger and smaller waves in the spread of the ocean
yearningly flowing,
The wake of the sea-ship after she passes, flashing
and frolicsome under the sun,
A motley procession with many a flick of foam and
many fragments,
Following the stately and rapid ship, in the wake
following.

Walt Whitman.

A GALE AT SEA

AFTER all, it is a glorious pastime to find oneself in a real gale of wind, in a big ship, with not a rock to run against within a thousand miles. One seems in such danger; and one is so safe. And gradually the sense of security grows, and grows into a sense of victory, as with the boy who fears his first fence, plucks up heart for the second, is rather pleased at the third, and craves for the triumph of the fourth and all the rest, sorry at last when the run is over. And when a man—not being sea-sick—has once discovered that the apparent heel of the ship in rolling is at least four times less than it looks, and that she will jump upright again in a quarter of a minute like a fisher's float; has learnt to get his trunk out from under his berth, and put it back again by jamming his forehead against the berth-side and his heels against

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the ship's wall; has learnt—if he sleep aft—to sleep through the firing of the screw, though it does shake all the marrow in his backbone; and has, above all, made a solemn vow to shave and bath every morning, let the ship be as lively as she will: then he will find a full gale a finer tonic, and a finer stirrer of wholesome appetite, than all the drugs of Apothecaries' Hall.

Charles Kingsley.

STANZAS, WRITTEN AT SEA

THOU white-rolling Sea! From thy foam-crested
billows,

That restlessly flash in the silver moon-beam,
In fancy I turn to the green-waving willows,

That rise by the side of my dear native stream.
There softly in moonlight soft waters are playing,
Which light-breathing zephyrs symphoniously
sweep;

While here the loud wings of the north-wind are
swaying,

And whirl the white spray of the wild-dashing
deep.

Sweet scenes of my childhood! with tender emotion,
King memory, still wakeful, your semblance por-
trays:

And I sigh, as I turn from the wide-beating ocean
To the paths where I roamed in my infantine
days.

Full Fathom Five

In fancy before me the pine-boughs are waving,
 Beneath whose deep canopy musing I strayed;
In crystalline waters their image is laving,
 And the friends of my bosom repose in their
 shade.

Ye fair-spreading fields, which fertility blesses!
 Ye rivers, that murmur with musical chime!
Ye groves of dark pine, in whose sacred recesses
 The nymph of romance holds her vigils sublime!
Ye heath-mantled hills, in lone wildness ascending!
 Ye valleys, true mansions of peace and repose!
Ever green be your shades, nature's children de-
 fending,
 Where liberty sweetens what labour bestows.

Oh blest, trebly blest, is the peasant's condition!
 From courts and from cities reclining afar,
He hears not the summons of senseless ambition,
 The tempests of ocean, and tumults of war.
Round the standard of battle though thousands may
 rally
 When the trumpet of glory is pealing aloud,
He dwells in the shade of his own native valley,
 And turns the same earth which his forefathers
 ploughed.

In realms far remote while the merchant is toiling,
 In search of that wealth he may never enjoy;
The land of his foes while the soldier is spoiling,
 When honour commands him to rise and destroy;

En Voyage

Through mountainous billows, with whirlwinds con-
tending,
While the mariner bounds over wide-ranging
seas,
Still peace, o'er the peasant her mantle extending,
Brings health and content in the sigh of the
breeze.

And happy, who knowing the world and its treasures,
Far, far from his home its allurements repels,
And leaves its vain pomps and fantastical pleasures,
For the woodlands where wisdom with solitude
dwells.

With the follies of custom disdaining compliance,
He leaves not his country false riches to find;
But content with the blessings of nature and science,
He pants for no wealth but the wealth of the
mind.

The beauties are his of the sweet-blushing morning,
The dew-spangled field, and the lark's matin-
song:

And his are the charms the full forest adorning,
When sport the noon-breezes its branches among:
And his, sweeter yet, is the twilight of even,
When melts the soft ray from the far-flashing
flood,

And fancy descends from the westerly heaven,
To talk with the Spirit that sings in the woods.

Full Fathom Five

In some hermit vale had kind destiny placed me,
 'Mid the silence of nature all lonely and drear,
Oh, ne'er from its covert ambition had chased me,
 To join the vain crowd in its frenzied career!
In the haunts of the forest my fancy is dwelling,
 In the mystical glade, by the lone river's shore,
Though wandering afar where the night-breeze is
 swelling,
And waters unbounded tumultuously roar.

I hail thee, dark ocean, in beauty tremendous!
 I love the hoarse dash of thy far-sounding waves!
But he feels most truly thy grandeur stupendous,
 Who in solitude sits mid thy surf-beaten caves.
From thy cliffs and thy caverns, majestic and hoary,
 Be mine to look forth on thy boundless array,
Alone to look forth on thy vast-rolling glory,
 And hear the deep lessons thy thunders convey.

But hope softly whispers, on moon-beams descend-
 ing:—

Despond not, oh mortal! thy sorrows are vain:
The heart, which misfortune and absence are rending,
 Love, friendship, and home shall enrapture again.
Though the night-billows rave to the tempest's
 commotion,

In the mild breath of morning their fury shall cease;
And the vessel, long tossed on the storm-troubled
 ocean

Shall furl her torn sails in the harbour of peace.

Thomas Love Peacock.

En Voyage

THE PACIFIC

THERE is one knows not what sweet mystery about this sea, whose gentle awful stirrings seem to speak of some hidden soul beneath; like those fabled undulations of the Ephesian sod over the buried evangelist, St. John. And meet it is, that over these sea-pastures, wide-rolling, watery prairies and Potters' Fields of all four continents, the waves should rise and fall, and ebb and flow unceasingly; for here, millions of mixed shades and shadows, drowned dreams, somnambulisms, revives; all that we call lives and souls, lie dreaming, dreaming, still; tossing like slumberers in their beds; the ever-rolling waves but made so by their restlessness.

To any meditative Magian rover, this serene Pacific once beheld, must ever after be the sea of his adoption. It rolls the midmost waters of the world, the Indian Ocean and Atlantic being but its arms. The same waves wash the moles of the new-built Californian towns, but yesterday planted by the recentest race of men, and lave the faded but still gorgeous skirts of Asiatic lands, older than Abraham; while all between float milky-ways of coral isles, and low-lying, endless, unknown Archipelagoes and impenetrable Japans. Thus this mysterious divine Pacific zones the world's whole bulk

Full Fathom Five

about; makes all coasts one bay to it; seems the tide-beating heart of earth. Lifted by those eternal swells, you needs must own the seductive god, bowing your head to Pan.

Herman Melville.

THE JOY OF THE SEA

WHERE lies the land to which the ship would go?

Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know,
And where the land she travels from? Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

On sunny noons upon the deck's smooth face,
Linked arm in arm, how pleasant here to pace;
Or, o'er the stern reclining, watch below
The foaming wake far widening as we go.

On stormy nights when wild north-westerns rave,
How proud a thing to fight with wind and wave!
The dripping sailor on the resting mast
Exults to bear, and scorns to wish it past.

Where lies the land to which the ship would go?
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know,
And where the land she travels from? Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

Arthur Hugh Clough.

En Voyage

THE LIFE OF A SHIP

THE passage had begun; and the ship, a fragment detached from the earth, went on lonely and swift, like a small planet. Round her the abysses of sky and sea met in an unattainable frontier. A great circular solitude moved with her, ever changing and ever the same, always monotonous and always imposing. Now and then another wandering white speck, burdened with life, appeared far off—disappeared; intent on its own destiny. The sun looked upon her all day, and every morning rose with a burning, round stare of undying curiosity. She had her own future; she was alive with the lives of those beings who trod her decks; like the earth which had given her up to the sea, she had an intolerable load of regrets and hopes. On her lived timid truth and audacious lies; and, like the earth, she was unconscious, fair to see—and condemned by men to an ignoble fate. The august loneliness of her path lent dignity to the sordid inspiration of her pilgrimage. She drove foaming to the southward, as if guided by the courage of a high endeavour. The smiling greatness of the sea dwarfed the extent of time. The days raced after one another, brilliant and quick like the flashes of a lighthouse, and the nights, eventful and short, resembled fleeting dreams.

Joseph Conrad.

Full Fathom Five

COMRADES OF THE SHIP

IN the week we were on board—it seemed a year, by the way—we came to regard the ship quite as a home. We felt for the captain a filial, a fraternal regard; for the providor, who provided for us with admirable comfort and generosity, a genial gratitude; and for the brisk steward's lads—brisk in serving the banquet, sympathising in handling the basin—every possible sentiment of regard and goodwill. What winds blew, and how many knots we ran, are all noted down, no doubt, in the ship's log; and as for what ships we saw—every one of them with their gunnage, tonnage, their nation, their direction whither they were bound, were not these all noted down with surprising ingenuity and precision by the lieutenant, at a family desk at which he sate, every night before a great paper, elegantly and mysteriously ruled off with his large ruler? I have a regard for every man on board that ship, from the captain down to the crew—down even to the cook, with tattooed arms, sweating among the saucepans in the galley, who used (with a touching affection) to send us locks of his hair in the soup. And so, while our feelings and recollections are warm, let us shake hands with this knot of good fellows, comfortably floating about in their little box of wood and iron, across Channel,

En Voyage

Biscay Bay, and the Atlantic, from Southampton water to Gibraltar Straits.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

A HEAD-WIND

A HEAD-WIND! Imagine a human face upon the vessel's prow, with fifteen thousand Sampsons in one bent upon driving her back, and hitting her exactly between the eyes whenever she attempts to advance an inch. Imagine the ship herself, with every pulse and artery of her huge body swollen and bursting under this mal-treatment, sworn to go on or die. Imagine the wind howling, the sea roaring, the rain beating: all in furious array against her. Picture the sky both dark and wild, and the clouds, in fearful sympathy with the waves, making another ocean in the air. Add to all this, the clattering on deck and down below; the tread of hurried feet, the loud hoarse shouts of seamen; the gurgling in and out of water through the scuppers; with, every now and then, the striking of a heavy sea upon the planks above, with the deep, dead, heavy sound of thunder heard within a vault;—and there is the head wind of that January morning.

Charles Dickens.

Full Fathom Five

ABOARD, AT A SHIP'S HELM

A BOARD at a ship's helm,
A young steersman steering with care.

A bell through fog on a sea-coast dolefully ringing,
An ocean-bell—O a warning bell, rock'd by the waves.

O you give good notice indeed, yon bell by the sea-
reefs ringing,
Ringing, ringing, to warn the ship from its wreck-
place.

For as on the alert, O steersman, you mind the
bell's admonition,
The bows turn—the freighted ship tacking speeds
away under her gray sails;
The beautiful and noble ship, with all her precious
wealth speeds away gayly and safe.

Walt Whitman.

FROM THE MAIN-TOP

I HAVE said that at sea all is vacancy; I should
correct the expression. To one given to day-
dreaming, and fond of losing himself in reveries,
a sea voyage is full of subjects of meditation; but
then they are the wonders of the deep and of the
air, and rather tend to abstract the mind from

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worldly themes. I delighted to loll over the quarter-railing, or climb to the main-top, of a calm day, and muse for hours together on the tranquil bosom of a summer's sky; to gaze upon the piles of golden clouds just peering above the horizon, fancy them some fairy realms, and people them with a creation of my own;—to watch the gentle undulating billows, rolling their silver volumes, as if to die away on those happy shores.

There was a delicious sensation of mingled security and awe with which I looked down, from my giddy height, on the monsters of the deep at their uncouth gambols. Shoals of porpoises tumbling above the bow of the ship; the grampus slowly heaving his huge form above the surface; or the ravenous shark, darting, like a spectre, through the blue waters. My imagination would conjure up all that I had heard or read of the watery world beneath me; of the finny herds that roam its fathomless valleys; of the shapeless monsters that lurk among the very foundations of the earth; and of those wild phantasms that swell the tales of fishermen and sailors.

Sometimes a distant sail, gliding along the edge of the ocean, would be another theme of idle speculation. How interesting this fragment of a world, hastening to rejoin the great mass of existence! What a glorious monument of human invention; which has in a manner triumphed over wind and wave; has brought the ends of the world into

Full Fathom Five

communion; has established an interchange of blessings, pouring into the sterile regions of the north all the luxuries of the south; has diffused the light of knowledge and the charities of cultivated life; and has thus bound together those scattered portions of the human race, between which nature seemed to have thrown an insurmountable barrier.

Washington Irving.

MARI MAGNO

DELIGHT it was to feel that wondrous force
That held us steady to our proposed course,
The burning resolute victorious will
'Gainst winds and waves that strive unwavering still.
Delight it was with each returning day
To learn the ship had won upon her way
Her sum of miles,—delight were mornings grey
And gorgeous eves,—nor was it less delight,
On each more temperate and favouring night,
Friend with familiar or with new-found friend,
To pace the deck, and o'er the bulwarks bend,
And the night watches in long converse spend;
While still new subjects and new thoughts arise
Amidst the silence of the seas and skies.

Arthur Hugh Clough.

En Voyage

THE SHIPWRECK

CIMMERIAN darkness shades the deep around,
Save when the lightning in terrific blaze
Deluge the cheerless gloom with horrid rays:
Above, all ether fraught with scenes of woe
With grim destruction threatens all below;
Beneath, the storm-lash'd surges furious rise,
And wave uproll'd on wave assails the skies;
With ever-floating bulwarks they surround
The ship, half swallow'd in the black profound.

With ceaseless hazard and fatigue oppress,
Dismay and anguish every heart possess;
For while, with sweeping inundation, o'er
The sea-beat ship the booming waters roar,
Displaced beneath by her capacious womb,
They rage their ancient station to resume;
By secret ambushes, their force to prove,
Through many a winding channel first they rove;
Till gathering fury, like the fever'd blood,
Through her dark veins they roll a rapid flood:
When unrelenting thus the leaks they found,
The clattering pumps with clanking strokes resound;
Around each leaping valve, by toil subdued,
The tough bull-hide must ever be renew'd:
Their sinking hearts unusual horrors chill,
And down their weary limbs thick dews distill;
No ray of light their dying hope redeems,
Pregnant with some new woe, each moment teems.

William Falconer.

Full Fathom Five

“FIRE!”

THE sailors began to show symptoms of fatigue, from the excess of their exertions; but many of the soldiers now offered to work at the pumps, and their services were willingly accepted. Their efforts were in vain. In about half an hour more, the hatches were blown up with a loud noise, and a column of intense and searching flame darted up perpendicularly from the hold, high as the lower mast-head. Then was heard the loud shriek of the women, who pressed their children in agony to their breasts, as the seamen and soldiers who had been working the pumps, in their precipitate retreat from the scorching flames, rushed aft, and fell among the huddled crowd. . . .

The column of fire now ascended above the main-top—licking with its forked tongue the topmast rigging—and embracing the mainmast in its folds; and the loud roar with which it ascended proved the violence and rapidity of the combustion below, and how little time there was to be lost. The lower and main decks were now so filled with smoke that no one could remain there; some few poor fellows sick in their cots had long been smothered, for they had been forgotten. The wind had much subsided, and there was not a breath of wind; the smoke which rose from the hatchways

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ascended straight up in the air, which, as the vessel had lost all steerage way, was fortunate.

The boats were soon in the water, and trusty men placed in them; the spars were launched over, arranged by the men in the boats, and lashed together. All the gratings were then collected and firmly fixed upon the spars for the people to sit upon; and Philip's heart was glad at the prospect which he now had of saving the numbers which were embarked.

Captain Marryat.

“LAND! LAND!”

LAND! land! land! Yes, there it was, far away to the south and west, beside the setting sun, a long blue bar between the crimson sea and golden sky. Land at last, with fresh streams, and cooling fruits, and free room for cramped and scurvy-weakened limbs. And there, too, might be gold, and gems, and all the wealth of Ind. Who knew? Why not? The old world of fact and prose lay thousands of miles behind them, and before them and around them was the realm of wonder and fable, of boundless hope and possibility. Sick men crawled up out of their stifling hammocks; strong men fell on their knees and gave God thanks; and all eyes and hands were stretched eagerly towards the far blue cloud, fading as the sun

Full Fathom Five

sank down, yet rising higher and broader as the ship rushed on before the rich trade-wind, which whispered lovingly round brow and sail, "I am the faithful friend of those that dare!"

Charles Kingsley.

VI
IN LIGHTER VEIN

In Lighter Vein

BY A RETIRED MARINER

FROM early youth I ploughed the restless Main,
My mind as restless and as apt to change;
Through every clime and ocean did I range,
In hope at length a competence to gain;
For poor to Sea I went, and poor I still remain.
Year after year I strove, but strove in vain,
And hardships manifold did I endure,
For Fortune on me never deigned to smile;
Yet I at last a resting-place have found,
With just enough life's comforts to procure,
In a snug Cove on this our favoured Isle,
A peaceful spot where Nature's gifts abound;
Then sure I have no reason to complain,
Though poor to Sea I went, and poor I still remain.

William Wordsworth.

SHE IS FAR FROM THE LAND

CABLES entangling her,
Shipspars for mangling her,
Ropes, sure of strangling her,
Blocks over-dangling her;
Tiller to batter her,
Tobacco to spatter her;
Boreas blustering,
Boatswain quite flustering,
Thunder-clouds mustering
To blast her with sulphur—

Full Fathom Five

If the deep don't engulf her;
Sometimes fear's scrutiny
Pries out a mutiny,
Sniffs conflagration,
Or hints at starvation:—
All the sea-dangers,
Buccaneers, rangers,
Pirates and Salle-men,
Algerine galley-men,
Tornadoes and typhons,
And horrible syphons,
And submarine travels
Thro' roaring sea-navels,
Everything wrong enough,
Long-boat not long enough,
Vessel not strong enough;
Pitch marring frippery,
The deck very slippery,
And the cabin—built sloping,
The Captain a-toping,
And the mate a blasphemer,
That names his Redeemer,
With inward uneasiness;
The cook known, by greasiness,
The victuals beslubber'd,
Her bed—in a cupboard;
Tings of strange christening,
Snatched in her listening,
Blue lights and red lights
And mention of dead-lights,

In Lighter Vein

And shrouds made a theme of,
Things horrid to dream of,—
And buoys in the water
To fear all exhort her;
Her friend no Leander,
Herself no sea-gander,
And ne'er a cork jacket
On board of the packet;
The breeze still a-stiffening,
The trumpet quite deafening;
Thoughts of repentance,
And doomsday and sentence;
Everything sinister,
Not a church minister,—
Pilot a blinderer,
Coral reefs under her,
Ready to sunder her;
Trunks tipsy-toppsy,
The ship in a dropsy;
Waves over-surfing her,
Sirens a-dirging her;
Sharks all expecting her,
Swordfish dissecting her,
Crabs with their hand-vices
Punishing land vices;
Sea-dogs and unicorns,
Things with no puny horns,
Mermen carnivorous—
“Good Lord deliver us!”

Thomas Hood.

Full Fathom Five

LITTLE BILLEE

(*Air*: "Il y avait un petit navire.")

THERE were three sailors of Bristol city
Who took a boat and went to sea.

But first with beef and captains' biscuits
And pickled pork they loaded she.

There was gorging Jack and guzzling Jimmy,
And the youngest he was little Billee.

Now when they got as far as the Equator
They'd nothing left but one split pea.

Says gorging Jack to guzzling Jimmy,
"I am extremely hungaree."

To gorging Jack says guzzling Jimmy,
"We've nothing left, us must eat we."

Says gorging Jack to guzzling Jimmy,
"With one another we shouldn't agree!

"There's little Bill, he's young and tender,
We're old and tough, so let's eat he."

"Oh! Billy, we're going to kill and eat you,
So undo the button of your chemie."

When Bill received this information
He used his pocket handkerchie.

"First let me say my catechism,
Which my poor mammy taught to me."

In Lighter Vein

“Make haste, make haste,” says guzzling Jimmy,
While Jack pulled out his snickersnee.

So Billy went up to the main-top gallant mast,
And down he fell on his bended knee.

He scarce had come to the twelfth commandment
When up he jumps, “There’s land I see:

“Jerusalem and Madagascar,
And North and South Amerikee:

There’s the British flag a-riding at anchor,
With Admiral Napier, K.C.B.”

So when they got aboard of the Admiral’s
He hanged fat Jack and flogged Jimmee:

But as for little Bill he made him
The captain of a seventy-three.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

THE SEA-SPELL

Could, could, he lies beneath the deep.

Old Scotch Ballad.

I

IT was a jolly mariner!
The tallest man of three,—
He loosed his sail against the wind,
And turned his boat to sea:
The ink-black sky told every eye
A storm was soon to be!

Full Fathom Five

II

But still that jolly mariner
Took in no reef at all,
For, in his pouch, confidently
He wore a baby's caul;
A thing, as gossip nurses know,
That always brings a squall!

III

His hat was new, or newly glazed,
Shone brightly in the sun;
His jacket, like a mariner'd,
True blue, as e'er was spun;
His ample trousers, like St. Paul,
Bore forty stripes save one.

IV

And now the fretting foaming tide
He steered away to cross;
The bounding pinnacle played a game
Of dreary pitch and toss;
A game that, on the good dry land,
Is apt to bring a loss!

V

Good Heaven befriend that little boat,
And guide her on her way!
A boat, they say, has canvas wings,
But cannot fly away!
Though like a merry singing bird,
She sits upon the spray!

In Lighter Vein

VI

Still east by south the little boat,
With tawny sail kept beating;
Now out of sight, between two waves,
Now o'er the horizon fleeting:
Like greedy swine that feed on mast,—
The waves her mast seemed eating!

VII

The sullen sky grew black above,
The wave as black beneath;
Each roaring billow showed full soon
A white and foamy wreath;
Like angry dogs that snarl at first,
And then display their teeth.

VIII

The boatman looked against the wind,
The mast began to creak,
The wave, per saltum, came and dried,
In salt upon his cheek!
The pointed wave against him reared,
As if it owned a pique!

IX

Nor rushing wind, nor gushing wave,
That boatman could alarm,
But still he stood away to sea,
And trusted in his charm;
He thought by purchase he was safe,
And armed against all harm!

Full Fathom Five

X

Now thick and fast and far aslant,
The stormy rain came pouring,
He heard upon the sandy bank
The distant breakers roaring,—
A groaning intermitting sound,
Like God and Magog snoring!

XI

The seafowl shrieked around the mast,
Ahead the grampus tumbled,
And far off, from a copper cloud,
The hollow thunder rumbled;
It would have quailed another heart,
But his was never humbled.

XII

For why? he had that infant's caul;
And wherefore should he dread?
Alas! alas! he little thought,
Before the ebb-tide sped,
That like that infant he should die,
And with a watery head!

XIII

The rushing brine flowed in apace;
His boat had ne'er a deck;
Fate seemed to call him on, and he
Attended to her beck;
And so he went, still trusting on,
Though reckless—to his wreck!

In Lighter Vein

XIV

For as he left his helm, to heave
The ballast bags a-weather,
Three monstrous seas came roaring on,
Like lions leagued together.
The two first waves the little boat
Swam over like a feather.

XV

The two first waves were past and gone,
And sinking in her wake;
The hugest still came leaping on,
And hissing like a snake,
Now helm-a-lee! for through the midst
The monster he must take!

XVI

Ah me! it was a dreary mount!
Its base as black as night,
Its top of pale and livid green,
Its crest of awful white,
Like Neptune with a leprosy,—
And so it reared upright!

XVII

With quaking sails the little boat
Climbed up the foaming heap;
With quaking sails it paused awhile,
At balance on the steep:
Then rushing down the nether slope,
Plunged with a dizzy sweep!

Full Fathom Five

XVIII

Look, how a horse, made mad with fear,
Disdains his careful guide;
So now the headlong headstrong boat,
Unmanaged turns aside,
And straight presents her reeling flank
Against the swelling tide!

XIX

The gusty wind assaults the sail;
Her ballast lies a-lee!
The sheets to windward, taunt and stiff!
Oh! the Lively—where is she?
Her capsized keel is in the foam,
Her pennon's in the sea!

XX

The wild gull, sailing overhead,
Three times beheld emerge
The head of that bold mariner,
And then she screamed his dirge!
For he had sunk within his grave,
Lapped in a shroud of surge!

XXI

The ensuing wave, with horrid foam,
Rushed o'er and covered all,—
The jolly boatman's drowning scream
Was smothered by the squall;
Heaven never heard his cry, nor did
The ocean heed his *caul*.

Thomas Hood.

In Lighter Vein

A SEA DIALOGUE

CABIN PASSENGER

MAN AT WHEEL

Cabin Passenger

FRIEND, you seem thoughtful. I not wonder
much

That he who sails the ocean should be sad.
I am myself reflective. When I think
Of all this wallowing beast, the Sea, has sucked
Between his sharp, thin lips, the wedgy waves,
What heaps of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, pearls;
What heaps of shekels, talents, ducats, crowns,
What bales of Tyrian mantles, Indian shawls,
Of silken tissues, wrought by worm and man,
The half-starved workman, and the well-fed worm;
What marbles, bronzes, pictures, parchments, books;
What many-lobuled, thought-engendering brains;
Lie with the gaping sea-shells in his maw,—
I, too, am silent; for all language seems
A mockery, and the speech of man is vain.
O mariner, we look upon the waves,
And they rebuke our babbling. "Peace!" they say,—
"Mortal, be still!" My noisy tongue is hushed,
And with my trembling finger on my lips
My soul exclaims in ecstasy—

Man at Wheel

Belay!

Full Fathom Five

Cabin Passenger

Ah yes! "Delay," it calls; "nor haste to break
The charm of stillness with an idle word!"
O mariner, I love thee, for thy thought
Strides even with my own, nay, flees before.
Thou art a brother to the wind and wave;
Have they not music for thine ear as mine,
When the wild tempest makes thy ship his lyre,
Smiting a cavernous basso from the shrouds
And climbing up his gamut through the stays,
Through buntlines, bowlines, ratlines, till it shrills
An alto keener than the locust sings,
And all the great Æolian orchestra
Storms out its mad sonata in the gale?
Is not the scene a wondrous and—

Man at Wheel

Avast!

Cabin Passenger

Ah yes, a vast, a vast and wondrous scene!
I see thy soul is open as the day
That holds the sunshine in its azure bowl
To all the solemn glories of the deep.
Tell me, O mariner, dost thou never feel
The grandeur of thine office,—to control
The keel that cuts the ocean like a knife
And leaves a wake behind it like a seam
In the great shining garment of the world?

In Lighter Vein

Man at Wheel

Belay y'r jaw, y' swab! y' hors-marine!

(To the Captain)

Ay, ay, sir! Stiddy, sir! Sou' wes' b' sou'!

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

A SAILOR'S APOLOGY FOR BOW-LEGS

THERE'S some is born with their legs straight
by natur—

And some is born with bow-legs from the
first—

And some that should have growed a good deal
straighter

But they were badly nursed,

And set, you see, with Bacchus, with their pegs
Astride of casks and kegs.

I've got myself a sort of bow to larboard

And starboard,

And this is what it was that warped my legs:

Twas all along of Poll, as I may say,

That fouled my cable when I ought to slip;

But on the tenth of May,

When I gets under weigh,

Down there in Hartfordshire, to join my ship.

I sees the mail,

Get under sail,

The only one there was to make the trip.

Full Fathom Five

Well, I gives chase,
But as she run
Two knots to one,
There warn't no use in keeping on the race!

Well, casting round about what next to try on,
And how to spin,
I spies an ensign with a Bloody Lion,
And bears away to leeward for the inn,
Beats round the gable,
And fetches up before the coach-horse stable.
Well, there they stand, four kickers in a row,
And so
I just makes free to cut a brown 'un's cable.
But riding isn't in a seaman's natur;
So I whips out a toughish end of yarn,
And gets a kind of sort of a land-waiter
To splice me, heel to heel,
Under the she-mare's keel,
And off I goes, and leaves the inn a-starn!

My eyes! how she did pitch!
And wouldn't keep her own to go in no line,
Tho' I kept bowsing, bowsing at her bow-line,
And always making lee-way to the ditch,
And yawed her head about all sorts of ways.
The devil sink the craft!
And wasn't she tremendous slack in stays!
We couldn't, no how, keep the inn abaft!

In Lighter Vein

Well, I suppose
We hadn't run a knot—or much beyond—
(What will you have on it?)—but off she goes,
Up to her bends in a fresh water pond!

There I am! all a-back!
So I looks forward for her bridle-gears,
To heave her head round on the t'other tack;
But when I starts,
The leather parts,
And goes away right over by the ears!

What could a fellow do,
Whose legs, like mine, you know, were in the
bilboes,
But trim myself upright for bringing-to,
And square his yard-arms, and brace up his elbows,
In rig all snug and clever,
Just while his craft was taking in her water?
I didn't like my berth though, howsomdever,
Because the yarn, you see, kept getting tauter.
Says I—I wish this job was rayther shorter!

The chase had gained a mile
A-head, and still the she-mare stood a-drinking:
Now all the while
Her body didn't take, of course, to shrinking.
Says I, she's letting out her reefs, I'm thinking;
And so she swelled and swelled,
And yet the tackle held,
Till both my legs began to bend like winkin.
My eyes! but she took in enough to founder!

Full Fathom Five

And there's my timbers straining every bit,
Ready to split,
And her tarnation hull a-growing rounder!

Well, there—off Hartford Ness,
We lay both lashed and water-logged together,
And can't contrive a signal of distress.
Thinks I, we must ride out this here foul weather,
Tho' sick of riding out, and nothing less;
When, looking round, I sees a man a-starn:
"Hollo!" says I, "come underneath her quarter!"
And hands him out my knife to cut the yarn.
So I gets off and lands upon the road,
And leaves the she-mare to her own consarn,
A-standing by the water.
If I get on another, I'll be blowed!
And that's the way, you see, my legs got bowed!

Thomas Hood.

THE WHITE SQUALL

ON deck, beneath the awning,
I dozing lay and yawning;
It was the grey of dawning,
Ere yet the sun arose;
And above the funnel's roaring,
And fitful wind's deploring,
I heard the cabin snoring
With universal nose.

In Lighter Vein

I could hear the passengers snorting,
I envied their disporting,
Vainly I was courting
 The pleasure of a doze.

So I lay, and wonderèd why light
Came not, and watched the twilight
And the glimmer of the skylight,
 That shot across the deck;
And the binnacle pale and steady,
And the dull glimpse of the dead-eye,
And the sparks in the fiery eddy,
 That whirled from the chimney neck:
In our jovial floating prison
There was sleep from fore to mizen,
And never a star had risen
 The hazy sky to speck.

Strange company we harboured:
We'd a hundred Jews to larboard,
Unwashed, uncombed, unbarbered,
 Jews black, and brown, and grey;
With terror it would seize ye,
And make your souls uneasy,
To see those Rabbis greasy,
 Who did nought but scratch and pray:
Their dirty children puking,
Their dirty saucepans cooking,
Their dirty fingers hooking
 Their swarming fleas away.

Full Fathom Five

To starboard Turks and Greeks were,
Whiskered, and brown their cheeks were,
Enormous wide their breeks were,

 Their pipes did puff alway;
Each on his mat allotted,
In silence smoked and squatted,
Whilst round their children trotted,

 In pretty pleasant play.
He can't but smile who traces
The smiles on those brown faces,
And the pretty prattling graces
 Of those small heathens gay.

And so the hours kept tolling,
And through the ocean rolling
Went the brave *Iberia* bowling
 Before the break of day—

When a SQUALL upon a sudden,
Came o'er the waters scudding;
And the clouds began to gather,
And the sea was lashed to lather,
And the lowering thunder grumbled,
And the lightning jumped and tumbled,
And the ship, and all the ocean,
Woke up in wild commotion.
Then the wind set up a howling,
And the poodle dog a yowling,
And the cocks began a crowing,
And the old cow raised a lowing,

In Lighter Vein

As she heard the tempest blowing;
And fowls and geese did cackle,
And the cordage and the tackle
Began to shriek and crackle;
And the spray dashed o'er the funnels,
And down the deck in runnels;
And the rushing water soaks all,
From the seamen in the fo'ksal,
To the stokers, whose black faces
Peer out of their bed-places;
And the captain he was bawling,
And the sailors pulling, hauling;
And the quarter-deck tarpauling
Was shivered in the squalling;
And the passengers awaken,
Most pitifully shaken;
And the steward jumps up, and hastens
For the necessary basins.

Then the Greeks they groaned and quivered,
And they knelt, and moaned, and shivered,
As the plunging waters met them,
And splashed and overset them,
And they call in their emergence
Upon countless saints and virgins;
And their marrowbones are bended,
And they think the world is ended.

And the Turkish women for'ard
Were frightened and behorr'd;

Full Fathom Five

And, shrieking and bewildering,
The mothers clutched their children;
The men sung, "Allah! Illah!
Mashallah Bismillah!"
As the warring waters doused them,
And splashed them and soused them;
And they called upon the Prophet,
And thought but little of it.

Then all the fleas in Jewry
Jumped up and bit like fury;
And the progeny of Jacob
Did on the main-deck wake up
(I wot those greasy Rabbins
Would never pay for cabins);
And each man moaned and jabbered in
His filthy Jewish gaberdine,
In woe and lamentation,
And howling consternation.
And the splashing water drenches
Their dirty brats and wenches;
And they crawl from bales and benches,
In a hundred thousand stench.

This was the White Squall famous,
Which latterly o'ercame us,
And which all will well remember
On the 28th September;
When a Prussian captain of Lancers
(Those tight-laced, whiskered prancers)

In Lighter Vein

Came on the deck astonished,
By that wild squall admonished,
And wondering cried, "Potz tausend,
Wie est der Sturm jetzt brausend?"
And looked at Captain Lewis,
Who calmly stood and blew his
Cigar in all the bustle,
And scorned the tempest's tussle.
And oft we've thought hereafter
How he beat the storm to laughter;

For well he knew his vessel
With that vain wind could wrestle;
And when a wreck we thought her,
And doomed ourselves to slaughter,
How gaily he fought her,
And through the hubbub brought her,
And, as the tempest caught her,
Cried, "GEORGE, SOME BRANDY-AND-WATER!"

And when, its force expended,
The harmless storm was ended,
And as the sunrise splendid
Came blushing o'er the sea;
I thought, as day was breaking,
My little girls were waking,
And smiling, and making
A prayer at home for me.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

Full Fathom Five

PAIN IN A PLEASURE BOAT

A SEA ECLOGUE

“I apprehend you!”—*School of Reform.*

BOATMAN

SHOVE off there!—ship the rudder, Bill—cast off! she’s under way!

MRS. F.

She’s under what?—I hope she’s not! good gracious, what a spray!

BOATMAN

Run out the jib, and rig the boom! keep clear of those two brigs!

MRS. F.

I hope they don’t intend some joke by running of their rigs!

BOATMAN

Bill, shift them bags of ballast aft—she’s rather out of trim!

MRS. F.

Great bags of stones! they’re pretty things to help a boat to swim.

BOATMAN

The wind is fresh—if she don’t scud, it’s not the breeze’s fault!

In Lighter Vein

MRS. F.

Wind fresh, indeed! I never felt the air so full of salt!

BOATMAN

That schooner, Bill, harn't left the roads, with oranges and nuts.

MRS. F.

If seas have roads, they're very rough—I never felt such ruts!

BOATMAN

It's neap, ye see, she's heavy lade, and couldn't pass the bar.

MRS. F.

That bar! what, roads with turnpikes too? I wonder where they are!

BOATMAN

Ho! Brig ahoy! hard up! hard up! that lubber cannot steer!

MRS. F.

Yes, yes—hard up upon a rock! I know some danger's near!

Look, there's a wave! it's coming in! and roaring like a bull!

BOATMAN

Nothing, Ma'am, but a little slop! go large, Bill! keep her full!

Full Fathom Five

MRS. F.

What, keep her full! what daring work! when full,
she must go down!

BOATMAN

Why, Bill, it lulls! ease off a bit—it's coming off
the town!

Steady your helm! we'll clear the *Pint*! lay right
for yonder pink!

MRS. F.

Be steady—well, I hope they can! but they've got
a pint to drink!

BOATMAN

Bill, give that sheet another haul—she'll fetch it up
this reach.

MRS. F.

I'm getting rather pale, I know, and they see it by
that speech!

I wonder what it is, now, but—I never felt so queer!

BOATMAN

Bill, mind your luff—why, Bill, I say she's yawing—
keep her near!

MRS. F.

Keep near! we're going further off; the land's
behind our backs.

BOATMAN

Be easy, Ma'am, it's all correct, that's only 'cause
we tacks;

In Lighter Vein

We shall have to beat about a bit—Bill, keep her out to sea.

MRS. F.

Beat who about? keep who at sea?—how black they look at me!

BOATMAN

It's veering round—I knew it would! off with her head! stand by!

MRS. F.

Off with her head! who's? where? what with?—an axe I seem to spy!

BOATMAN

She can't keep her own, you see; we shall have to pull her in!

MRS. F.

They'll drown me, and take all I have! my life's not worth a pin!

BOATMAN

Look out you know, be ready, Bill—just when she takes the sand!

MRS. F.

The sand—O Lord! to stop my mouth! how everything is planned!

BOATMAN

The handspike, Bill—quick, bear a hand! now, Ma'am, just step ashore!

Full Fathom Five

MRS. F.

What ! ain't I going to be killed—and weltered in
my gore ?

Well, Heaven be praised ! but I'll not go sailing
any more !

Thomas Hood.

THE YARN OF THE “NANCY BELL”

'T WAS on the shores that round our coast
From Deal to Ramsgate span,
That I found alone on a piece of stone
An elderly naval man.

His hair was weedy, his beard was long,
And weedy and long was he,
And I heard this wight on the shore recite,
In a singular minor key :

“ Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the Nancy brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.”

And he shook his fists and he tore his hair,
Till I really felt afraid,
For I couldn't help thinking the man had been
drinking,
And so I simply said :

In Lighter Vein

“Oh, elderly man, it’s little I know
Of the duties of men of the sea,
But I’ll eat my hand if I understand
How you can possibly be

“At once a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo’sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain’s gig.”

Then he gave a hitch to his trousers, which
Is a trick all seamen larn,
And having got rid of a thumping quid,
He spun this painful yarn :

“’Twas in the good ship *Nancy Bell*
That we sailed to the Indian sea,
And there on a reef we came to grief,
Which has often occurred to me.

“And pretty nigh all o’ the crew was drowned
(There was seventy-seven o’ soul),
And only ten o’ the *Nancy’s* men
Said ‘Here!’ to the muster-roll.

“There was me and the cook and the captain bold
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And the bo’sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain’s gig.

Full Fathom Five

“ For a month we’d neither wittles nor drink,
Till a-hungry we did feel,
So we drewed a lot, and accordin’ shot
The captain for our meal.

“ The next lot fell to the *Nancy’s* mate,
And a delicate dish he made,
Then our appetite with the midshipmite
We seven survivors stayed.

“ And then we murdered the bo’sun tight,
And he much resembled pig;
Then we wittled free, did the cook and me,
On the crew of the captain’s gig.

“ Then only the cook and me was left,
And the delicate question, ‘ Which
Of us two goes to the kettle? ’ arose
And we argued it out as sich.

“ For I loved that cook as a brother, I did,
And the cook he worshipped me ;
But we’d both be blowed if we’d either be stowed
In the other chap’s hold, you see.

“ ‘ I’ll be eat if you dines off me,’ says TOM,
‘ Yes, that,’ says I, ‘ you’ll be,’—
‘ I’m boiled if I die, my friend,’ quoth I,
And ‘ Exactly so,’ quoth he.

In Lighter Vein

“Says he, ‘Dear JAMES, to murder me
Were a foolish thing to do,
For don’t you see that you can’t cook *me*,
While I can—and will—cook *you*!’

“So he boils the water, and takes the salt
And the pepper in proportions true
(Which he never forgot), and some chopped shalot,
And some sage and parsley too.

“‘Come here,’ says he, with a proper pride,
Which his smiling features tell,
‘Twill soothing be if I let you see,
How extremely nice you’ll smell.’

“And he stirred it round and round and round,
And he sniffed at the foaming broth;
When I ups with his heels, and smothers his squeals
In the scum of the boiling broth.

“And I eat that cook in a week or less,
And—as I eating be
The last of his chops, why, I almost drops,
For a wessel in sight I see!

* * * * *

“And I never grieve, and I never smile,
And I never larf nor play,
But I sit and I croak, and a single joke
I have—which is to say :

Full Fathom Five

“Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo’sun tight and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain’s gig!”

Sir W. S. Gilbert.

THE DEMON SHIP

TWAS off the Wash—the sun went down—the
sea looked black and grim,
For stormy clouds, with murky fleece, were
mustering at the brim;
Titanic shades! enormous gloom!—as if the solid
night

Of Erebus rose suddenly to seize upon the light!
It was a time for mariners to bear a wary eye,
With such a dark conspiracy between the sea and
sky!

Down went my helm—close reefed—the tack held
freely in my hand—

With ballast snug—I put about, and scudded for
the land.

Loud hissed the sea beneath her lea—my little boat
flew fast,

But faster still the rushing storm came borne upon
the blast.

Lord! what a roaring hurricane beset the straining
sail!

What furious sleet, with level drift, and fierce as-
saults of hail!

In Lighter Vein

What darksome caverns yawned before! what jagged
steeps behind!

Like battle-steeds, with foamy manes, wild tossing
in the wind.

Each after each sank down astern, exhausted in the
chase,

But where it sank another rose and galloped in its
place;

As black as night—they turned to white, and cast
against the cloud

A snowy sheet, as if each surge upturned a sailor's
shroud:

Still flew my boat; alas! alas! her course was nearly
run!

Behold yon fatal billow rise—ten billows heaped in
one!

With fearful speed the dreary mass came rolling,
rolling, fast,

As if the scooping sea contained one only wave at
last!

Still on it came, with horrid roar, a swift pursuing
grave;

It seemed as if some cloud had turned its hugeness
to a wave!

Its briny sleet began to beat beforehand in my
face—

I felt the rearward keel begin to climb its swelling base!

I saw its alpine hoary head impending over mine!

Another pulse—and down it rushed—an avalanche
of brine!

Full Fathom Five

Brief pause had I, on God to cry, or think of wife
and home;

The waters closed—and when I shrieked, I shrieked
below the foam!

Beyond that rush I have no hint of any after deed—
For I was tossing on the waste, as senseless as a
weed.

* * * * *

“Where am I?—in the breathing world, or in the
world of death?”

With sharp and sudden pang I drew another birth
of breath;

My eyes drank in a doubtful light, my ears a doubt-
ful sound—

And was that ship a *real* ship whose tackle seemed
around?

A moon, as if the earthly moon, was shining up
aloft;

But were those beams the very beams that I had
seen so oft?

A face, that mocked the human face, before me
watched alone;

But were those eyes the eyes of man that looked
against my own?

Oh, never may the moon again disclose me such a
sight

As met my gaze, when first I looked, on that ac-
cursèd night!

In Lighter Vein

I've seen a thousand horrid shapes begot of fierce
extremes

Of fever; and most frightful things have haunted
in my dreams—

Hyenas—cats—blood-loving bats—and apes with
hateful stare—

Pernicious snakes, and shaggy bulls—the lion, and
the she-bear—

Strong enemies, with Judas looks, of treachery and
spite—

Detested features, hardly dimmed, and banished by
the light!

Pale-sheeted ghosts, with gory locks, upstarting
from their tombs—

All phantasies and images that flit in midnight
glooms—

Hags, goblins, demons, lemures, have made me all
aghast,—

But nothing like that GRIMLY ONE who stood be-
fore the mast!

His cheek was black—his brow was black—his eyes
and hair as dark:

His hand was black, and, where it touched, it left
a sable mark;

His throat was black, his vest the same, and, when
I looked beneath,

His breast was black—all, all was black, except his
grinning teeth.

Full Fathom Five

His sooty crew were like in hue, as black as Afric
slaves!

Oh, horror! e'en the ship was black that ploughed
the inky waves!

"Alas!" I cried, "for love of truth and blessed
mercy's sake!

Where am I? in what dreadful ship? upon what
dreadful lake?

What shape is that, so very grim, and black as any
coal?

It is Mahound, the Evil One, and he has gained
my soul!

Oh, mother dear! my tender nurse! dear meadows,
that beguiled

My happy days, when I was yet a little sinless
child,—

My mother dear—my native fields, I never more
shall see:

I'm sailing in the Devil's Ship upon the Devil's
Sea!"

Loud laughed that SABLE MARINER, and loudly
in return

His sooty crew sent forth a laugh that rang from
stem to stern—

A dozen pair of grimly cheeks were crumpled on
the nonce—

As many sets of grinning teeth came shining out
at once:

In Lighter Vein

A dozen gloomy shapes at once enjoyed the merry
fit,
With shriek and yell, and oaths as well, like Demons
of the Pit.
They crowed their fill, and then the Chief made
answer for the whole ;—
“ Our skins,” said he, “ are black, ye see, because
we carry coal ;
You’ll find your mother sure enough, and see your
native fields—
For this here ship has picked you up—the Mary
Ann of Shields ! ”

Thomas Hood.

VII
SEA-SONGS

Sea-Songs

A SEA SONG

A WET sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast,
And fills the white and rustling sail,
And bends the gallant mast;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While, like the eagle free,
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.

O, for a soft and gentle wind !
I heard a fair one cry ;
But give to me the roaring breeze,
And white waves heaving high ;
And white waves heaving high, my boy,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home,
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon hornèd moon,
And lightning in yon cloud ;
And hark ! the music, mariners,
The wind is piping loud ;
The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashing free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

Allan Cunningham.

Full Fathom Five

WIND AND FOAM

O WIND from the west,
O spray from the sea,
Bring ye never the guest
Of my thoughts to me?
Come, build me a face
With blue eyes and tears,
And the sweet childish grace
Of ebb'd-away years!

O wild west wind!
O salt sea spray!
Ere she left us behind
On that desolate day,
At my bosom she sobbed,
While I clasped her and wept;
And her heart—how it throbbed!
As yet closer she crept.

O wind and white foam,
Bring her near, bring her here!
Let her ride to me home—
My darling, my dear!
On the wild horses' back,
Down the trough of the sea,
O'er the storm and the wrack,
Come, thou lost one, to me!

Lady Lindsay.

Sea-Songs

POOR JACK

I

G O patter to lubbers and swabs, d'ye see,
'Bout danger, and fear, and the like ;
A tight water-boat and good sea-room give me,
And t'aint to a little I'll strike :

Though the tempest top-gallant masts smack smooth
should smite,
And shiver each splinter of wood,
Clear the wreck, stow the yards, and house every-
thing tight,
And under reef'd foresail we'll scud :

Avast! nor don't think me a milksop so soft
To be taken for trifles aback ;
For they say there's a Providence sits up aloft,
To keep watch for the life of Poor Jack.

II

Why, I heard our good chaplain palaver one day
About souls, heaven, mercy, and such ;
And, my timbers ! what lingo he'd coil and belay,
Why, 'twas just all as one as High Dutch :

For he said how a sparrow can't founder, d'ye see,
Without orders that come down below ;
And many fine things that proved clearly to me
That Providence takes us in tow :

Full Fathom Five

For, says he, do you mind me, let storms e'er so oft,
Take the topsails of sailors aback,
There 's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft,
To keep watch for the life of Poor Jack.

III

I said to our Poll, for, d'ye see, she would cry,
When last we weigh'd anchor for sea,
What argufies sniv'ling and piping your eye,
Why, what a damn'd fool you must be !

Can't you see the world 's wide, and there 's room
for us all,
Both for seamen and lubbers ashore,
And if to old Davy I should go, friend Poll,
Why you will ne'er hear of me more :

What then, all 's a hazard, come don't be so soft,
Perhaps I may laughing come back,
For, d'ye see, there 's a cherub sits smiling aloft,
To keep watch for the life of Poor Jack.

IV

D'ye mind me, a sailor should be every inch
All as one as a piece of the ship,
And with her brave the world without offering to
flinch,
From the moment the anchor 's a-trip.

Sea-Songs

As for me, in all weathers, all times, sides, and ends,
Nought 's a trouble from duty that springs,
For my heart is my Poll's, and my rhino's my
friend's,
And as for my life, 'tis the King's :

Even when my time comes, ne'er believe me so soft
As for grief to be taken aback,
For the same little cherub that sits up aloft
Will look out a good berth for Poor Jack.

Charles Dibdin.

SONG OF THE ZETLAND FISHERMAN

FAREWELL, merry maidens, to song and to
laugh,
For the brave lads of Westra are bound to the
Haaf;

And we must have labour, and hunger, and pain,
Ere we dance with the maids of Dunrossness again.

For now, in our trim boats of Norway deal,
We must dance on the waves, with the porpoise
and seal!

The breeze it shall pipe, so it pipe not too high,
And the gull be our songstress whene'er she flits by.

Sing on, my brave bird, while we follow, like thee,
By bank, shoal, and quicksand, the swarms of the
sea;

Full Fathom Five

And when twenty-score fishes are straining our line,
Sing louder, brave bird, for their spoils shall be thine.

We'll sing while we bait, and we'll sing while we haul,
For the deeps of the Haaf have enough for us all :
There is torsk for the gentle, and skate for the carle,
And there's wealth for bold Magnus, the son of the
 earl.

Huzza! my brave comrades, give way for the Haaf,
We shall sooner come back to the dance and the
 laugh ;

For life without mirth is a lamp without oil ;
Then, mirth and long life to the bold Magnus Troil !
 Sir Walter Scott.

BLOW HIGH, BLOW LOW

BLOW high, blow low, let tempests tear
 The main-mast by the board ;
 My heart, with thoughts of thee, my dear,
 And love well stored,
Shall brave all danger, scorn all fear,
 The roaring winds, the raging sea,
 In hopes on shore
 To be once more
 Safe moored with thee.

Aloft while mountains high we go,
 The whistling winds that scud along,

Sea-Songs

And surges roaring from below,
 Shall my signal be,
 To think on thee;
And this shall be my song:
 Blow high, blow low.

Blow high, blow low, let tempests tear
 The main-mast by the board;
My heart, with thoughts of thee, my dear,
 And love well stored,
Shall brave all danger, scorn all fear,
 The roaring winds, the raging sea,
 In hopes on shore
 To be once more
 Safe moored with thee.

And on that night when all the crew
 The memory of their former lives
O'er flowing cans of flip renew,
 And drink their sweethearts and their wives
I'll heave a sigh, and think on thee;
And as the ship rolls on the sea,
The burden of my song shall be—
 Blow high, blow low.

Blow high, blow low, let tempests tear
 The main-mast by the board;
My heart, with thoughts of thee, my dear,
 And love well stored,

Full Fathom Five

Shall brave all danger, scorn all fear,
The roaring winds, the raging 'sea,
In hopes on shore
To be once more
Safe moored with thee.

Charles Dibdin.

FAR, FAR UPON THE SEA

FAR, far upon the sea,
The good ship speeding free,
Upon the deck we gather young and old;
And view the flapping sail,
Spreading out before the gale,
Full and round without a wrinkle or a fold:
Or watch the waves that glide
By the stately vessel's side,
And the wild sea-birds that follow through the air.
Or we gather in a ring,
And with cheerful voices sing,
Oh! gaily goes the ship when the wind blows fair.

Far, far upon the sea,
With the sunshine on our lee,
We talk of pleasant days when we were young,
And remember, though we roam,
The sweet melodies of home—
The songs of happy childhood which we sung.
And though we quit her shore,
To return to it no more,

Sea-Songs

Sound the glories that Britannia yet shall bear;
That "Britons rule the waves"
"And never shall be slaves."
Oh! gaily goes the ship when the wind blows fair.

Far, far upon the sea,
Whate'er our country be,
The thought of it shall cheer us as we go.
And Scotland's sons shall join
In the song of "Auld Lang Syne,"
With voice by memory softened, clear and low.
And the men of Erin's Isle,
Battling sorrow with a smile,
Shall sing "St. Patrick's Morning," void of care;
And thus we pass the day,
As we journey on the way;
Oh! gaily goes the ship when the wind blows fair.
Charles Mackay.

HEAVING OF THE LEAD

FOR England when with favouring gale
Our gallant ship up channel steered,
And, scudding under easy sail,
The high blue western land appeared;
To heave the lead the seaman sprung,
And to the pilot cheerly sung,
"By the deep—nine!"

Full Fathom Five

And bearing up to gain the port,
Some well-known object kept in view;
An abbey-tower, the harbour-fort,
Or beacon to the vessel true;
While oft the lead the seaman flung,
And to the pilot cheerly sung,
“By the mark—seven!”

And as the much-loved shore we near,
With transport we behold the roof
Where dwelt a friend or partner dear,
Of faith and love a matchless proof.
The lead once more the seaman flung
And to the watchful pilot sung,
“Quarter less—five!”

Now to her berth the ship draws nigh:
We shorten sail—she feels the tide—
“Stand clear the cable,” is the cry—
The anchor’s gone; we safely ride.
The watch is set, and through the night
We hear the seaman with delight
Proclaim—“All’s well!”
Anonymous (1780).

Sea-Songs

TOM BOWLING

I

HERE, a sheer hulk, lies Tom Bowling,
The darling of our crew;
No more he'll hear the tempest howling,
For death has broached him to.

His form was of the manliest beauty,
His heart was kind and soft;
Faithful below he did his duty,
But now he's gone aloft.

II

Tom never from his word departed,
His virtues were so rare;
His friends were many and true-hearted;
His Poll was kind and fair;

And then he'd sing so blithe and jolly;
Ah, many's the time and oft!
But mirth is turned to melancholy,
For Tom is gone aloft.

III

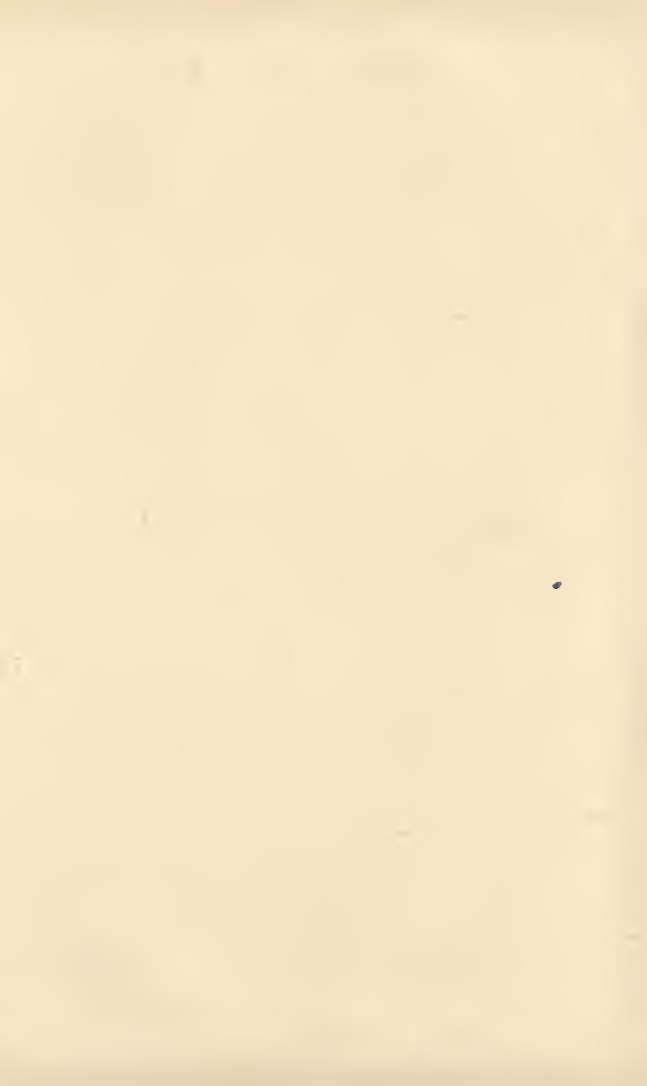
Yet shall poor Tom find pleasant weather,
When He, who all commands,
Shall give, to call life's crew together,
The word to pipe all hands.

Full Fathom Five

Thus Death, who kings and tars dispatches,
In vain Tom's life has doffed;
For though his body's under hatches,
His soul is gone aloft.

Charles Dibdin.

VIII
LEGENDS AND PHANTASIES



Legends and Phantasies

THE CAPTAIN

A LEGEND OF THE NAVY

HE that only rules by terror
Doeth grievous wrong.
Deep as Hell I count his error,
Let him hear my song.
Brave the Captain was : the seamen
Made a gallant crew,
Gallant sons of English freemen,
Sailors bold and true.
But they hated his oppression,
Stern he was and rash;
So for every light transgression
Doom'd them to the lash.
Day by day more harsh and cruel
Seem'd the Captain's mood.
Secret wrath like smother'd fuel
Burnt in each man's blood.
Yet he hoped to purchase glory,
Hoped to make the name
Of his vessel great in story,
Wheresoe'er he came.
So they passed by capes and islands,
Many a harbour-mouth,
Sailing under palmy highlands
Far within the South.
On a day when they were going
O'er the lone expanse,

Full Fathom Five

In the north, her canvas flowing,
 Rose a ship of France.
Then the Captain's colour heighten'd,
 Joyful came his speech :
But a cloudy gladness lighten'd
 In the eyes of each.
"Chase," he said: the ship flew forward,
 And the wind did blow ;
Stately, lightly, went she Norward,
 Till she near'd the foe.
Then they look'd at him they hated,
 Had what they desired :
Mute with folded arms they waited—
 Not a gun was fired.
But they heard the foeman's thunder
 Roaring out their doom ;
All the air was torn in sunder,
 Crashing went the boom,
Spars were splinter'd, decks were shatter'd,
 Bullets fell like rain ;
Over mast and deck were scatter'd
 Blood and brains of men.
Spars were splinter'd ; decks were broken :
 Every mother's son—
Down they dropt—no word was spoken—
 Each beside his gun.
On the decks as they were lying,
 Were their faces grim.
In their blood, as they lay dying,
 Did they smile on him.

Legends and Phantasies

Those, in whom he had reliance
For his noble name,
With one smile of still defiance
Sold him unto shame.
Shame and wrath his heart confounded,
Pale he turn'd and red,
Till himself was deadly wounded
Falling on the dead.
Dismal error ! fearful slaughter !
Years have wander'd by,
Side by side beneath the water
Crew and Captain lie ;
There the sunlit ocean tosses
O'er them mouldering,
And the lonely sea-bird crosses
With one waft of the wing.

Lord Tennyson.

THE INCHCAPE ROCK

NO stir in the air, no stir in the sea,
The ship was as still as she could be,
Her sails from Heaven received no motion,
Her keel was steady in the ocean.

Without either sign or sound of their shock
The waves floated over the Inchcape Rock ;
So little they rose, so little they fell,
They did not move the Inchcape Bell.

Full Fathom Five

The Abbot of Aberbrothok
Had placed that bell on the Inchcape Rock;
On a buoy in the storm it floated and swung,
And over the waves its warning rung.

When the rock was hid by the surges' swell,
The mariners heard the warning bell;
And then they knew the perilous Rock,
And blest the Abbot of Aberbrothok.

The Sun in Heaven was shining gay,
All things were joyful on that day;
The sea-birds screamed as they wheel'd round,
And there was joyaunce in their sound.

The buoy of the Inchcape Bell was seen
A darker speck on the ocean green;
Sir Ralph the Rover walk'd his deck,
And he fixed his eye on the darker speck.

He felt the cheering power of spring,
It made him whistle, it made him sing;
His heart was mirthful to excess,
But the Rover's mirth was wickedness.

His eye was on the Inchcape float,
Quoth he, "My men, put out the boat,
And row me to the Inchcape Rock,
And I'll plague the Abbot of Aberbrothok."

Legends and Phantasies

The boat is lower'd, the boatmen row,
And to the Inchcape Rock they go;
Sir Ralph bent over from the boat,
And he cut the Bell from the Inchcape float.

Down sunk the Bell with a gurgling sound,
The bubbles rose and burst around;
Quoth Sir Ralph, "The next who comes to the Rock,
Won't bless the Abbot of Aberbrothok."

Sir Ralph the Rover sail'd away,
He scour'd the seas for many a day;
And now grown rich with plunder'd store,
He steers his course for Scotland's shore.

So thick a haze o'erspreads the sky
They cannot see the sun on high;
The wind hath blown a gale all day,
At evening it hath died away.

On the deck the Rover takes his stand,
So dark it is they see no land.
Quoth Sir Ralph, "It will be lighter soon,
For there is the dawn of the rising Moon."

"Canst hear," said one, "the breakers roar?
For methinks we should be near the shore."
"Now where we are I cannot tell,
But I wish I could hear the Inchcape Bell."

Full Fathom Five

They hear no sound, the swell is strong;
Though the wind hath fallen they drift along,
Till the vessel strikes with a shivering shock,—
“Oh Christ! It is the Inchcape Rock!”

Sir Ralph the Rover tore his hair;
He curst himself in his despair;
The waves rush in on every side,
The ship is sinking beneath the tide.

But even in his dying fear
One dreadful sound could the Rover hear,
A sound as if with the Inchcape Bell,
The Devil below was ringing his knell.

Robert Southey.

DEAD CALM IN THE TROPICS

THE fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
’Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody sun, at noon,

Legends and Phantasies

Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yes, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

ALONE WITH THE DEAD

ALONE, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:

Full Fathom Five .

And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on ; and so did I.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away ;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray ;
But or ever a prayer has gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my eyes and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat ;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky,
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reck did they :
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high ;
But oh ! more horrible than that
Is the curse in a dead man's eye !
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

Legends and Phantasies

THE BREEZE AFTER THE CALM

O H sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew,
And when I woke, it rained,

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments were all dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sounds it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

Full Fathom Five

The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side:
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

A SEA-DREAM

C HILDREN dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
The sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,

Legends and Phantasies

Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Matthew Arnold.

A VISION OF DROWNING

LORD! Lord! methought, what pain it was to
drown!
What dreadful noise of waters in mine ears!
What ugly sights of death within mine eyes!
Methought, I saw a thousand fearful wrecks;
Ten thousand men that fishes gnaw'd upon;
Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,
Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,
All scatter'd in the bottom of the sea.
Some lay in dead men's skulls; and, in those holes,
Where eyes did once inhabit, there were crept
(As 'twere in scorn of eyes) reflecting gems,
Which woo'd the slimy bottom of the deep,
And mock'd the dead bones that lay scatter'd by.

William Shakespeare.

Full Fathom Five

THE SEA-FAIRIES

SLOW sail'd the weary mariners and saw,
Betwixt the green brink and the running foam,
Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms prest
To little harps of gold; and while they mused
Whispering to each other half in fear,
Shrill music reach'd them on the middle sea.

Whither away, whither away, whither away? fly no
more.

Whither away from the high green field, and the
happy blossoming shore?

Day and night to the billow the fountain calls:
Down shower the gambolling waterfalls
From wandering o'er the lea:

Out of the live-green heart of the dells
They freshen the silvery-crimson shells,
And thick with white bells the clover-hill swells
High over the full-toned sea:

O hither, come hither and furl your sails,
Come hither to me and to me:

Hither, come hither and frolic and play;
Here it is only the mew that wails;

We will sing to you all the day:

Mariner, mariner, furl your sails,

For here are the blissful downs and dales,

And merrily, merrily carol the gales,

And the spangle dances in bight and bay,

And the rainbow forms and flies on the land

Legends and Phantasies

Over the islands free;
And the rainbow lives in the curve of the sand;
Hither, come hither and see;
And the rainbow hangs on the poising wave,
And sweet is the colour of cove and cave,
And sweet shall your welcome be:
O hither, come hither, and be our lords,
For merry brides are we:
We will kiss sweet kisses, and speak sweet words:
O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten
With pleasure and love and jubilee:
O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten
When the sharp clear twang of the golden chords
Runs up the ridged sea.
Who can light on as happy a shore
All the world o'er, all the world o'er?
Whither away? listen and stay: mariner, mariner,
fly no more.

Lord Tennyson.

THE OCEAN WOOD

GRAY woods within whose silent shade
The ocean-voice is dimly known:
Where undisturbed the violets fade,
And roses perish overblown.

Calm rests the wave against the beach:
Calm rocks the wave-bird on its tide,

Full Fathom Five

And calmer in their heaven than each,
The gleaming bands of sunset ride.

Soon will the ripple move again:
Soon will the shorelark flute its song:
And in sweet emphasis of pain
The rock-dove mourn the cliffs along.

Sweet shall resound the curlew's wail.
New sails come sweeping over the sea.
But all the ships that ever sail
Will bring no comfort home to me.

Lord de Tabley.

SONG OF THE MERMAIDS AND MERMEN

Mermaid

FATHOMS deep beneath the wave,
Stringing beads of glistening pearl,
Singing the achievements brave
Of many an old Norwegian earl;
Dwelling where the tempest's raving,
Falls as light upon our ear,
As the sigh of lover, craving
Pity from his lady dear,
Children of wild Thule, we,
From the deep caves of the sea,
As the lark springs from the lea,
Hither come, to share your glee.

Legends and Phantasies

Merman

From reining of the water-horse,
That bounded till the waves were foaming,
Watching the infant tempest's course,
Chasing the sea-snake in his roaming;
From winding charge-notes on the shell,
When the huge whale and sword-fish duel,
Or tolling shroudless seamen's knell,
When the winds and waves are cruel;
Children of wild Thule, we
Have plough'd such furrows on the sea,
As the steer draws on the lea,
And hither we come to share your glee.

Mermaids and Mermen

We heard you in our twilight caves,
A hundred fathom deep below,
For notes of joy can pierce the waves,
That drown each sound of war and woe.
Those who dwell beneath the sea
Love the sons of Thule well;
Thus, to aid your mirth, bring we
Dance, and song, and sounding shell.
Children of dark Thule know,
Those who dwell by haaf and voe,
Where your daring shallops row,
Come to share the festal show.

Sir Walter Scott.

Full Fathom Five

THE CITY IN THE SEA

L O! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst and the best
Have gone to their eternal rest.
There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not!)
Resemble nothing that is ours.
Around, by lifting wings forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy heaven come down
On the long night-time of that town;
But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently—
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free—
Up domes—up spires—up kingly halls—
Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers—
Up many and many a marvellous shrine
Where wreathèd friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,

Legends and Phantasies

While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves
Yawn level with the luminous waves;
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye—
Not the gaily-jewelled dead
Tempt the waters from their bed;
For no ripples curl, alas!
Along that wilderness of glass—
No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea—
No heavings hint that winds have been
On seas less hideously serene.

But lo, a stir is in the air!
The wave—there is a movement there,
As if the towers had thrust aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide—
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven.
The waves have now a redder glow—
The hours are breathing faint and low—
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence.

Edgar Allan Poe.

Full Fathom Five

A SEA DREAM

WE saw the slow tides go and come,
The curving surf-lines lightly drawn,
The gray rocks touched with tender bloom
Beneath the fresh-blown rose of dawn.

We saw in richer sunsets lost
The sombre pomp of showery noons;
And signalled spectral sails that crossed
The weird, low light of rising moons.

On stormy eves from cliff and head
We saw the white spray tossed and spurned;
While over all, in gold and red,
Its face of fire the lighthouse turned.

The rail-car brought its daily crowds,
Half curious, half indifferent,
Like passing sails or floating clouds,
We saw them as they came and went.

But, one calm morning, as we lay
And watched the mirage-lifted wall
Of coast, across the dreamy bay,
And heard afar the curlew call,

And nearer voices, wild or tame,
Of airy flock, and childish throng,
Up from the water's edge there came
Faint snatches of familiar song.

Legends and Phantasies

Careless we heard the singer's choice
Of old and common airs; at last
The tender pathos of his voice
In one low chanson held us fast.

A song that mingled joy and pain,
And memories old and sadly sweet;
While, timing to its minor strain,
The waves in lapsing cadence beat.

The waves are glad in breeze and sun,
The rocks are fringed with foam;
I walk once more a haunted shore,
A stranger, yet at home,—
A land of dreams I roam.

Is this the wind, the soft sea-wind
That stirred thy locks of brown?
Are these the rocks whose mosses knew
The trail of thy light gown,
Where boy and girl sat down? —

I see the gray fort's broken wall,
The boats that rock below;
And, out at sea, the passing sails
We saw so long ago
Rose-red in morning's glow.

The freshness of the early time
On every breeze is blown;

Full Fathom Five

As glad the sea, as blue the sky,—
The change is ours alone;
The saddest is my own.

A stranger now, a world-worn man,
Is he who bears my name;
But thou, methinks, whose mortal life
Immortal youth became,
Art evermore the same.

Thou art not here, thou art not there,
Thy place I cannot see;
I only know that where thou art
The blessed angels be,
And heaven is glad for thee.

Forgive me if the evil years
Have left on me their sign;
Wash out, O soul so beautiful,
The many stains of mine
In tears of love divine!

I could not look on thee and live,
If thou wert by my side;
The vision of a shining one,
The white and heavenly bride,
Is well to me denied.

But turn to me thy dear girl-face
Without the angel's crown,

Legends and Phantasies

The wedded roses of thy lips,
Thy loose hair rippling down
In waves of golden brown.

Look forth once more through space and time,
And let thy sweet shade fall
In tenderest grace of soul and form
On memory's frescoed wall.
A shadow, and yet all!

Draw near, more near, for ever dear!
Where'er I rest or roam,
Or in the city's crowded streets,
Or by the blown sea foam
The thought of thee is home!

At breakfast hour the singer read
The city news, with comment wise,
Like one who felt the pulse of trade
Beneath his finger fall and rise.

His look, his air, his curt speech told
The man of action, not of books,
To whom the corners made in gold
And stocks were more than seaside nooks.

Of life beneath the life confessed
His song had hinted unawares;
Of flowers in traffic's ledgers pressed,
Of human hearts in bulls and bears.

Full Fathom Five

But eyes in vain were turned to watch
That face so hard, and shrewd and strong;
And ears in vain grew sharp to catch
The meaning of that morning song.

In vain some sweet-voiced querist sought
To sound him, leaving as she came;
Her baited album only caught
A common, unromantic name.

No word betrayed the mystery fine,
That trembled on the singer's tongue;
He came and went, and left no sign
Behind him save the song he sung.

J. G. Whittier.

THE PHANTOM SHIP

I N Mather's Magnalia Christi,
Of the old colonial time,
May be found in prose the legend
That is here set down in rhyme.

A ship sailed from New Haven,
And the keen and frosty airs,
That filled her sails at parting,
Were heavy with good men's prayers.

Legends and Phantasies

“O Lord! if it be thy pleasure”—
Thus prayed the old divine—
“To bury our friends in the ocean,
Take them, for they are thine!”

But Master Lamberton muttered,
And under his breath said he,
“This ship is so crank and walty,
I fear our grave she will be!”

And the ships that came from England,
When the winter months were gone,
Brought no tidings of this vessel
Nor of Master Lamberton.

This put the people to praying
That the Lord would let them hear
What in his greater wisdom
He had done with friends so dear.

And at last their prayers were answered:
It was in the month of June,
An hour before the sunset
Of a windy afternoon,

When, steadily steering landward,
A ship was seen below,
And they knew it was Lamberton, Master,
Who sailed so long ago.

Full Fathom Five

On she came, with a cloud of canvas,
Right against the wind that blew,
Until the eye could distinguish
The faces of the crew.

Then fell her straining topmasts,
Hanging tangled in the shrouds,
And her sails were loosened and lifted,
And blown away like clouds.

And the masts, with all their rigging,
Fell slowly, one by one,
And the hulk dilated and vanished,
As a sea-mist in the sun !

And the people who saw this marvel
Each said unto his friend,
That this was the mould of their vessel,
And thus her tragic end.

And the pastor of the village
Gave thanks to God in prayer,
That, to quiet their troubled spirits,
He had sent this Ship of Air.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Legends and Phantasies

A VISION OF THE SEA

'TIS the terror of tempest. The rags of the sail
Are flickering in ribbons within the fierce gale:
From the stark night of vapours the dim rain
is driven,

And when lightning is loosed, like a deluge from
Heaven,

She sees the black trunks of the waterspouts spin
And bend, as if Heaven was running in,
Which they seemed to sustain with their terrible
mass

As if ocean had sunk from beneath them: they pass
To their graves in the deep with an earthquake of
sound,

And the waves and the thunders, made silent around,
Leave the wind to its echo. The vessel, now tossed
Through the low-trailing rack of the tempest, is lost
In the skirts of the thunder-cloud: now down the
sweep

Of the wind-cloven wave to the chasm of the deep
It sinks, and the walls of the watery vale
Whose depths of dread calm are unmoved by the
gale,

Dim mirrors of ruin, hang gleaming about ;
While the surf, like a chaos of stars, like a rout
Of death-flames, like whirlpools of fire-flowing iron,
With splendour and terror the black ship environ,
Or like sulphur-flakes hurled from a mine of pale fire
In fountains spout o'er it. In many a spire

Full Fathom Five

The pyramid-billows with white points of brine
In the cope of the lightning inconstantly shine,
As piercing the sky from the floor of the sea,
The great ship seems splitting ! it cracks as a tree,
While an earthquake is splintering its root, ere the
blast

Of the whirlwind that stripped it of branches has
passed.

The intense thunder-balls which are raining from
Heaven

Have shattered its mast, and it stands black and
riven.

The chinks suck destruction. The heavy dead hulk
On the living sea rolls an inanimate bulk,
Like a corpse on the clay which is hungering to fold
Its corruption around it. Meanwhile, from the hold,
One deck is burst up by the waters below,
And it splits like the ice when the thaw-breezes blow
O'er the lakes of the desert ! Who sit on the other ?
Is that all the crew that like burying each other,
Like the dead in a breach, round the foremast ?
Are those

Twin tigers, who burst, when the waters arose,
In the agony of terror, their chains in the hold ;
(What now makes them tame, is what then made
them bold ;)

Who crouch side by side, and have driven, like a
crank,

The deep grip of their claws through the vibrating
plank :—

Legends and Phantasies

Are these all? Nine weeks the tall vessel had lain
On the windless expanse of the watery plain,
Where the death-darting sun cast no shadow at noon,
And there seemed to be fire in the beams of the
moon,

Till a lead-coloured fog gathered up from the deep,
Whose breath was quick pestilence ; then, the cold
sleep

Crept, like blight through the ears of a thick field
of corn,

O'er the populous vessel. And even and morn,
With their hammocks for coffins, the seamen aghast
Like dead men the dead limbs of their comrades cast
Down the deep, which closed on them above and
around,

And the sharks and the dogfish their grave-clothes
unbound,

And were gluttoned like Jews with this manna rained
down

From God on their wilderness. One after one
The mariners died ; on the eve of this day, —
When the tempest was gathering in cloudy array,
But seven remained. Six the thunder has smitten,
And they lie black as mummies on which Time has
written

His scorn of the embalmer ; the seventh, from the
deck

An oak-splinter pierced through his breast and his
back,

And hung out to the tempest, a wreck on the wreck.

Full Fathom Five

No more? At the helm sits a woman more fair
Than Heaven, when, unbinding its star-braided hair,
It sinks with the sun on the earth and the sea.
She clasps a bright child on her upgathered knee;
It laughs at the lightning, it mocks the mixed thunder
Of the air and the sea, with desire and with wonder
It is beckoning the tigers to rise and come near,
It would play with those eyes where the radiance
of fear

Is outshining the meteors; its bosom beats high,
The heart-fire of pleasure has kindled its eye,
While its mother's is lustreless. "Smile not, my child,
But sleep deeply and sweetly, and so be beguiled
Of the pang that awaits us, whatever that be,
So dreadful since thou must divide it with me!
Dream, sleep! This pale bosom, thy cradle and bed,
Will it rock thee not, infant? 'Tis beating with dread!
Alas! what is life, what is death, what are we,
That when the ship sinks we no longer may be?
What! to see thee no more, and to feel thee no more?
Not to be after life what we have been before?
Not to touch those sweet hands? Not to look on
those eyes,

Those lips, and that hair,—all that smiling disguise
Thou yet wearest, sweet Spirit, which I, day by day,
Have so long called my child, but which now fades
away

Like a rainbow, and I the fallen shower?"—Lo!
the ship

Is settling, it topples, the leeward ports dip;

Legends and Phantasies

The tigers leap up when they feel the slow brine
Crawling inch by inch on them ; hair, ears, limbs,
and eyne,

Stand rigid with horror ; a loud, long, hoarse cry
Bursts at once from their vitals tremendously,
And 'tis bornedown the mountainous vale of the wave,
Rebounding, like thunder, from crag to cave,
Mixed with the clash of the lashing rain,
Hurried on by the might of the hurricane :

The hurricane came from the west, and passed on
By the path of the gate of the eastern sun,
Transversely dividing the stream of the storm ;
As an arrowy serpent, pursuing the form
Of an elephant, bursts through the brakes of the
waste.

Black as a cormorant, the screaming blast,
Between Ocean and Heaven, like an ocean, passed,
Till it came to the clouds on the verge of the world
Which, based on the sea and to Heaven upcurled,
Like columns and walls did surround and sustain
The dome of the tempest ; it rent them in twain,
As a flood rends its barriers of mountainous crag :
And the dense clouds in many a ruin and rag,
Like the stones of a temple ere earthquake has passed,
Like the dust of its fall, on the whirlwind are cast ;
They are scattered like foam on the torrent ; and
where

The wind has burst out through the chasm, from
the air

Of clear morning the beams of the sunrise flow in,

Full Fathom Five

Unimpeded, keen, golden, and crystalline,
Banded armies of light and of air: at one gate
They encounter, but interpenetrate.
And that breach in the tempest is widening away,
And the caverns of clouds are torn up by the day,
And the fierce winds are sinking with weary wings,
Lulled by the motion and murmurings
And the long grassy heave of the rocking sea;
And overhead glorious, but dreadful to see,
The wrecks of the tempest, like vapours of gold,
Are consuming at sunrise. The heaped waves behold
The deep calm of blue Heaven dilating above,
And, like passions made still by the presence of Love,
Beneath the clear surface reflecting it slide
Tremulous with soft influence; extending its tide
From the Andes to Atlas, round mountain and isle,
Round sea-birds and wrecks, paved with Heaven's
azure smile,
The wide world of waters is vibrating. Where
Is the ship? On the verge of the wave where it lay
One tiger is mingled in ghastly affray
With a sea-snake. The foam and the smoke of the
battle
Stain the clear air with sunbows; the jar, and the rattle
Of solid bones crushed by the infinite stress
Of the snake's adamantine voluminousness;
And the hum of the hot blood that spouts and rains
Where the grip of the tiger has wounded the veins
Swollen with rage, strength, and effort; the whirl
and the splash

Legends and Phantasies

As of some hideous engine whose brazen teeth smash
The thin winds and soft waves into thunder; the
streams

And hissings crawl fast o'er the smooth ocean-
streams,

Each sound like a centipede. Near this commotion,
A blue shark is hanging within the blue ocean,
The fin-winged tomb of the victor. The other
Is winning his way from the fate of his brother
To his own with the speed of despair. Lo! a boat
Advances; twelve rowers with the impulse of thought
Urge on the keen keel,—the brine foams. At the stern
Three marksmen stand levelling. Hot bullets burn
In the breast of the tiger, which yet bears him on
To his refuge and ruin. One fragment alone,—
'Tis dwindling and sinking, 'tis now almost gone,
Of the wreck of the vessel peers out of the sea,
With her left hand she grasps it impetuously,
With her right she sustains her fair infant. Death,
Fear,

Love, Beauty, are mixed in the atmosphere,
Which trembles and burns with the fervour of dread
Around her wild eyes, her bright hand, and her head,
Like a meteor of light o'er the waters! her child
Is yet smiling, and playing, and murmuring; so
smiled

The false deep ere the storm. Like a sister and brother
The child and the ocean still smile on each other,
Whilst—

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

IX

THE CRUELTY OF THE SEA

The Cruelty of the Sea

THE BALLAD OF THE BOAT

THE stream was as smooth as glass, we said :
 “ Arise and let's away ” ;
The Siren sang beside the boat that in the
 rushes lay ;
And spread the sail, and strong the oar, we gaily
 took our way.
When shall the sandy bar be cross'd ? When shall
 we find the bay ?

The broadening flood swells slowly out o'er cattle-
 dotted plains,
The stream is strong and turbulent, and dark with
 heavy rains,
The labourer looks up to see our shallop speed away.
When shall the sandy bar be cross'd ? When shall
 we find the bay ?

Now are the clouds like fiery shrouds ; the sun,
 superbly large,
Slow as an oak to woodman's stroke sinks flaming
 at their marge.
The waves are bright with mirror'd light as jacinths
 on our way.
When shall the sandy bar be cross'd ? When shall
 we find the bay ?

Full Fathom Five

The moon is high up in the sky, and now no more
we see

The spreading river's either bank, and surging
distantly

There booms a sullen thunder as of breakers far
away.

Now shall the sandy bar be cross'd, now we shall
find the bay !

The sea-gull shrieks high overhead, and dimly to
our sight

The moonlit crests of foaming waves gleam towering
through the night.

We'll steal upon the mermaid soon, and start her
from her lay,

When once the sandy bar is cross'd, and we are in
the bay.

What rises white and awful as a shroud-enfolded
ghost?

What roar of rampant tumult bursts in clangour on
the coast ?

Pull back, pull back ! The raging flood sweeps every
oar away.

O stream, is this thy bar of sand ? O boat, is this
thy bay ?

Richard Garnett.

The Cruelty of the Sea

THE SINKING SHIP

THE terrible day wore on, without any lightening of the tempest, till noon, when the wind suddenly fell to a calm. Until that time the sea, although heavy, was not vicious or irregular, and we had not shipped any heavy water at all. But when the force of the wind was suddenly withdrawn, such a sea arose as I have never seen before or since. Inky mountains of water raised their savage heads in wildest confusion, smashing one another in whirlpools of foam. It was like a picture of the primeval deep out of which arose the new-born world. Suddenly out of the whirling blackness overhead the moon appeared, nearly in the zenith, sending down through the apex of a dome of torn and madly gyrating cloud a flood of brilliant light. Illumined by that startling radiance, our staunch and seaworthy ship was tossed and twirled on the hideous vortex of mad sea until her motion was distracting. It was quite impossible to loose one's hold and attempt to do anything without running the imminent risk of being dashed to pieces. Our decks were full of water now, for it tumbled on board at all points ; but as yet no serious weight of a sea had fallen upon us, nor had any damage been done. Such a miracle as that could not be expected to continue for long. Suddenly a warning shout rang out from somewhere—"Hold on all, for your lives !" Out of the hideous turmoil around

Full Fathom Five

arose, like some black, fantastic ruin, an awful heap of water. Higher and higher it towered, until it was level with our lower yards, then it broke, and fell upon us. All was blank. Beneath that mass every thought, every feeling, fled but one—"How long shall I be able to hold my breath?" After what seemed a never-ending time, we emerged from the wave more dead than alive, but with the good ship still staunch beneath us, and Hope's lamp burning brightly. The moon had been momentarily obscured, but now shone out again, lighting up brilliantly our bravely-battling ship. But, alas for others!—men, like ourselves, whose hopes were gone. Quite near us was the battered remainder of what had been a splendid ship. Her masts were gone, not even the stumps being visible, and it seemed to our eager eyes as if she was settling down. It was even so, for as we looked, unmindful of our own danger, she quickly disappeared—swallowed up with her human freight in a moment, like a pebble dropped into a pond.

F. T. Bullen.

THE BURTHEN OF THE TIDE

THE tide was dark an' heavy with the burthen
that it bore,
I heard it talkin', whisperin', upon the weedy
shore:

The Cruelty of the Sea

Each wave that stirred the sea-weed was like a
closing door,

'Tis closing doors they hear at last who hear no
more, no more,

My Grief
No more!

The tide was in the salt sea-weed, and like a knife
it tore,

The hoarse sea-wind went moaning, soeing, moan-
ing o'er and o'er,

The wild sea-heart was brooding deep upon its
ancient lore,

I heard the sob, the soeing sob, the dying sob at
its core,

My Grief
Its core!

The white sea-waves were wan and grey its ashy
lips before;

The whirled spume between its jaws in floods did
seaward pour,

O whisperin' weed, O wild sea-waves, O hollow
baffled roar,

Since one thou hast, O dark dim Sea, why callest
thou for more,

My Grief
For more.

"Fiona Macleod" (William Sharp).

Full Fathom Five

A ROUGH NIGHT

THE labouring of the ship in the troubled sea on this night I shall never forget. "Will it ever be worse than this?" was a question I had often heard asked, when everything was sliding and bumping about, and when it did seem difficult to comprehend the possibility of anything afloat being more disturbed, without toppling over and going down. But what the agitation of a steam-vessel is, on a bad winter's night in the wild Atlantic, it is impossible for the most vivid imagination to conceive. To say that she is flung down on her side in the waves, with her masts dipping into them, and that, springing up again, she rolls over on the other side, until a heavy sea strikes her with the noise of a hundred great guns, and hurls her back—that she stops, and staggers and shivers, as though stunned, and then, with a violent throbbing at her heart, darts onward like a monster goaded into madness, to be beaten down, and battered, and crushed, and leaped on by the angry sea—that thunder, lightning, hail, and rain, and wind, are all in fierce contention for the mastery—that every plank has its groan, every nail its shriek, and every drop of water in the great ocean its howling voice—is nothing. To say that all is grand, and all appalling and horrible in the last degree, is

The Cruelty of the Sea

nothing. Words cannot express it. Thoughts cannot convey it. Only a dream can call it up again, in all its fury, rage, and passion.

Charles Dickens.

WRATH

O THOU vast Ocean! Ever-sounding sea!
Thou symbol of a drear immensity!
Thou thing that windest round the solid world
Like a huge animal, which, downward hurl'd
From the black clouds, lies weltering and alone,
Lashing and writhing till its strength be gone.
Thy voice is like the thunder, and thy sleep
Is as a giant's slumber, loud and deep.
Thou speakest in the East and in the West
At once, and on thy heavily laden breast
Fleets come and go, and shapes that have no life
Or motion, yet are moved and meet in strife. . . .

Thou only, terrible Ocean, hast a power,
A will, a voice, and in thy wrathful hour,
When thou dost lift thine anger to the clouds,
A fearful and magnificent beauty shrouds
Thy broad green forehead. If thy waves be driven
Backwards and forwards by the shifting wind,
How quickly dost thou thy great strength unbind,
And stretch thine arms, and war at once with
Heaven.

Bryan Waller Procter.

Full Fathom Five

THE PITILESS SEA

WHEREIN differ the sea and the land, that a miracle upon one is not a miracle upon the other? Preternatural terrors rested upon the Hebrews, when under the feet of Korah and his company the live ground opened and swallowed them up for ever; yet not a modern sun ever sets, but in precisely the same manner the live sea swallows up ships and crews.

But not only is the sea such a foe to man who is an alien to it, but it is also a fiend to its own offspring; worse than the Persian host who murdered his own guests; sparing not the creatures which itself hath spawned. Like a savage tigress that tossing in the jungle overlays her own cubs, so the sea dashes even the mightiest whales against the rocks, and leaves them there side by side with the split wrecks of ships. No mercy, no power but its own controls it. Panting and snorting like a mad battle steed that has lost its rider, the masterless ocean overruns the globe.

Consider the subtleness of the sea; how its most dreaded creatures glide under water, unapparent for the most part, and treacherously hidden between the loveliest tints of azure. Consider also the devilish brilliance and beauty of many of its most remorseless tribes, as the dainty embellished shape of many species of sharks. Consider, once more, the universal

The Cruelty of the Sea

cannibalism of the sea ; all whose creatures prey upon each other, carrying on eternal war since the world began.

Herman Melville.

A SEA DIRGE

FULL fathom five thy father lies :
Of his bones are coral made ;
Those are pearls that were his eyes :
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell :
Hark ! now I hear them,—
Ding, dong, Bell.

William Shakespeare.

THE STORM

WE got out of the Channel with a prosperous breeze, which died away, leaving us becalmed about fifty leagues to the westward of the Lizard: but this state of inaction did not last long; for next night our main-top-sail was split by the wind, which, in the morning, increased to a hurricane. I was wakened by a most horrible din, occasioned by the play of the gun-carriages upon

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the decks above, the cracking of cabins, the howling of the wind through the shrouds, the confused noise of the ship's crew, the pipes of the boatswain and his mates, the trumpets of the lieutenants, and the clanking of the chain-pumps. . . . I went above; but, if my sense of hearing was startled before, how must my sight have been appalled in beholding the effects of the storm! The sea was swelled into billows mountain-high, on the top of which our ship sometimes hung as if it were about to be precipitated to the abyss below! Sometimes we sunk between two waves that rose on each side higher than our topmast-head, and threatened by dashing together to overwhelm us in a moment! Of all our fleet, consisting of a hundred and fifty sail, scarce twelve appeared, and these driving under their bare poles, at the mercy of the tempest. At length the mast of one of them gave way, and tumbled overboard with a hideous crash! Nor was the prospect in our own ship much more agreeable; a number of officers and sailors ran backward and forward with distraction in their looks, hallooing to one another, and undetermined what they should attend to first. Some clung to the yards, endeavouring to unbind the sails that were split into a thousand pieces flapping in the wind; others tried to furl those which were yet whole; while the masts at every pitch, bent and quivered like twigs, as if they would have shivered into innumerable splinters.

Tobias Smollett.

The Cruelty of the Sea

THREE FISHERS

THREE fishers went sailing out into the west,
Out into the west, as the sun went down,
Each thought of the woman who loved him best,
And the children stood watching them out of
the town ;

For men must work, and women must weep,
And there's little to earn, and many to keep,
Though the harbour-bar be moaning.

Three wives sat up in the lighthouse tower,
And they trimmed the lamps as the sun went
down ;

They looked at the squall, and they looked at the
shower,

And the night-rack came rolling up ragged and
brown ;

But men must work, and women must weep,
Though storms be sudden, and waters deep,
And the harbour-bar be moaning.

Three corpses lie out on the shining sands,
In the morning gleam, as the tide goes down,
And the women are weeping, and wringing their
hands,

For those who never come home to the town.
For men must work, and women must weep,
And the sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep,
And good-bye to the bar and its moaning.

Charles Kingsley.

Full Fathom Five

FOG

"STOP her," we heard the man cry, at the telegraph below. We crowded the companion in an effort to reach deck together, and the bell rang often enough, while we were arriving, to drive the staff below distracted. I got to the side in time to see a huge liner's dim shape slide by like a street at night; she would have been invisible but for her row of lights. We could have reached her on a gangway. The man at our wheel was spinning his spokes desperately to avoid banging into vessels we could not see, but whose bells were ringing everywhere about us. We had run full tilt into a fog bank apparently packed with ships, and were saving ourselves and them by guesswork while stopping the way on our boat. The veiled moon was looking over the wall of the fog, and the stars above our deck were bright. But our hull was shoving into a murk which was as opaque as cheese, and had the same flavour. From all directions came the quick ringing of the bells of frightened vessels. Twice across our bows appeared perilous shadows, sprinkled with dim stars, and then high walls went slowly by us. I don't know how long it was before our boat came to a stand, but it was long enough for us. You imagined the presence in the dark of impending bodies, and straining over-side to see them, listening to the sucking of the invisible water,

The Cruelty of the Sea

nervously fanned the fog in a ridiculous effort to clear it.

Down our anchor dropped at last, and our own bell then rang as a sign to the invisible flock that we too were harmless. As soon as our unseen neighbours heard our exhaust humming, their continued frantic ringing subsided, and only occasionally they gave a shaking to hear if we answered from the same spot ; until at last there was absolute silence, as though all had crept silently away, and left us alone there. So we waited with our riding lights. Our usual lights were only shrouded, for we were fully confident there would be a clearance presently. But the rampart of the fog built itself up, covered the moon, and finally robbed us of the overhead stars. Imprisoned by the thick walls we lay till morning, listening to the doleful tolling of the Mucking bell.

H. M. Tomlinson.

A WINTER STORM

OCEAN, unequal pressed, with broken tide
And blind commotion heaves; while from
the shore,
Eat into caverns by the restless wave,
And forest-rustling mountains, comes a voice,
That solemn sounding bids the world prepare.
Then issues forth the storm with sudden burst,

Full Fathom Five

And hurls the whole precipitated air,
Down, in a torrent. On the passive main
Descends the eternal force, and with strong gust
Turns from its bottom the discolour'd deep.
Through the black night that sits immense around,
Lash'd into foam, the fierce conflicting brine
Seems o'er a thousand raging waves to burn.
Meantime the mountain-billows to the clouds
In dreadful tumult swell'd, surge above surge,
Burst into chaos with tremendous roar,
And anchor'd navies from their stations drive,
Wild as the winds across the howling waste
Of mighty waters: now the inflated wave
Straining they scale, and now impetuous shoot
Into the secret chambers of the deep,
The wintry Baltic thundering o'er their head.
Emerging thence again, before the breath
Of full-exerted Heaven, they wing their course,
And dart on distant coasts; if some sharp rock,
Or shoal insidious, break not their career,
And in loose fragments fling them floating round.

James Thomson.

THE STEAMBOAT

SEE how yon flaming herald treads
The ridged and rolling waves,
As, crashing o'er their crested heads,
She bows her surly slaves!

The Cruelty of the Sea

With foam before and fire behind,
She rends the clinging sea,
That flies before the roaring wind,
Beneath her hissing lee.

The morning spray, like sea-born flowers,
With heaped and glistening bells,
Falls round her fast, in ringing showers,
With every wave that swells;
And, burning o'er the midnight deep,
In lurid fringes thrown,
The living gems of ocean sweep
Along her flashing zone.

With clashing wheel, and lifting keel,
And smoking torch on high,
When winds are loud, and billows reel,
She thunders foaming by;
When seas are silent and serene,
With even beam she glides,
The sunshine glimmering through the green
That skirts her gleaming sides.

Now, like a wild nymph, far apart
She veils her shadowy foam,
The beating of her restless heart
Still sounding through the storm ;
Now answers, like a courtly dame,
The reddening surges o'er,
With flying scarf of spangled flame,
The Pharos of the shore.

Full Fathom Five

To-night yon pilot shall not sleep,
Who trims his narrowed sail;
To-night yon frigate scarce shall keep
Her broad breast to the gale;
And many a foresail, scooped and strained,
Shall break from yard and stay,
Before this smoky wreath has stained
The rising mist of day.

Hark! hark! I hear yon whistling shroud,
I see yon quivering mast;
The black throat of the hunted cloud
Is panting forth the blast!
An hour, and, whirled like winnowing chaff,
The giant surge shall fling
His tresses o'er yon pennon staff,
White as the sea-bird's wing!

Yet rest, ye wanderers of the deep;
Nor wind nor wave shall tire
Those fleshless arms, whose pulses leap
With floods of living fire;
Sleep on,—and, when the morning light
Streams o'er the shining bay,
Oh think of those for whom the night
Shall never wake in day!

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

The Cruelty of the Sea

THE STORM

C EASE, rude Boreas, blust'ring railer!
List, ye landsmen, all to me!
Messmates, hear a brother sailor
Sing the dangers of the sea;
From bounding billows, fast in motion,
When the distant whirlwinds rise,
To the tempest-troubled ocean,
Where the seas contend with skies!

Hark! the boatswain hoarsely bawling,
By topsail-sheets and haul-yard stand!
Down top-gallants quick be hauling;
Down your stay-sails, hand, boys, hand!
Now it freshens, set the braces,
Quick the topsail-sheets let go,
Luff, boys, luff! don't make wry faces,
Up your topsails nimbly clew.

Now all of you on down-beds sporting,
Fondly lock'd in beauty's arms;
Fresh enjoyments wanton courting,
Safe from all but love's alarms;
Round us roars the tempest louder;
Think what fear our minds enthrals;
Harder yet, it blows still harder,
Now again the boatswain calls!

Full Fathom Five

The topsail-yards point to the wind, boys,
See all clear to reef each course ;
Let the foresheet go, don't mind, boys,
Though the weather should be worse.
Fore and aft the spritsail-yard get,
Reef the mizen, see all clear ;
Hands up, each preventive-brace set,
Man the foreyard, cheer, boys, cheer !

Now the dreadful thunder 's roaring,
Peal on peal contending clash,
On our heads fierce rain falls pouring,
In our eyes blue lightnings flash.
One wide water all around us,
All above us one black sky,
Different deaths at once surround us :
Hark ! what means that dreadful cry ?

The foremast 's gone, cries every tongue out,
O'er the lee, twelve feet 'bove deck ;
A leak beneath the chest-tree 's sprung out,
Call all hands to clear the wreck.
Quick the lanyards cut to pieces :
Come, my hearts, be stout and bold :
Plumb the well—the leak increases,
Four feet water in the hold !

While o'er the ship wild waves are beating,
We for wives and children mourn ;
Alas ! from hence there 's no retreating,
Alas ! to them there 's no return.

The Cruelty of the Sea

Still the leak is gaining on us :

Both chain-pumps are choked below—
Heav'n have mercy here upon us !

For only that can save us now.

O'er the lee-beam is the land, boys,

Let the guns o'erboard be thrown ;
To the pump let every hand, boys ;

See ! our mizen-mast is gone.

The leak we've found, it cannot pour fast,

We've lighten'd her a foot or more ;

Up, and rig a jury-foremast,

She rights, she rights ! boys, we're off shore.

Now once more on joys we're thinking,

Since kind Heav'n has saved our lives ;

Come, the can, boys ! let 's be drinking

To our sweethearts and our wives.

Fill it up, about ship wheel it,

Close to lips a brimmer join ;

Where 's the tempest now—who feels it?

None—the danger 's drown'd in wine.

George Alexander Stevens.

GREEK MARINERS

WE were nearing the isle of Cyprus, when there arose half a gale of wind, with a heavy, chopping sea. My Greek seamen considered that the weather amounted not to a half, but to an

Full Fathom Five

integral gale of wind at the very least, so they put up the helm, and scudded for twenty hours ; when we neared the mainland of Anadoli, the gale ceased, and a favourable breeze springing up, soon brought us off Cyprus once more. Afterwards the wind changed again, but we were still able to lay our course by sailing close-hauled.

We were at length in such a position, that by holding on our course for about half an hour, we should get under the lee of the island, and find ourselves in smooth water, but the wind had been gradually freshening ; it now blew hard, and there was a heavy sea running.

As the grounds for alarm arose, the crew gathered together in one close group ; they stood pale and grim under their hooded capotes like monks awaiting a massacre, anxiously looking by turns along the pathway of the storm, and then upon each other, and then upon the eye of the Captain who stood by the helmsman. Presently the Hydriot came aft, more moody than ever, the bearer of fierce remonstrance against the continuing of the struggle ; he received a resolute answer, and still we held our course. Soon there came a heavy sea that caught the bow of the brigantine as she lay jammed in betwixt the waves ; she bowed her head low under the waters, and shuddered through all her timbers—then gallantly stood up again over the striving sea with bowsprit entire. But where were the crew ?—It was a crew no longer, but rather a gathering

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of Greek citizens;—the shout of the seamen was changed for the murmuring of the people—the spirit of the old Demos was alive. The men came aft in a body, and loudly asked that the vessel should be put about, and that the storm be no longer tempted. Now, then, for speeches:—the Captain, his eyes flashing fire, his frame all quivering with emotion—wielding his every limb, like another, and a louder voice, pours forth the eloquent torrent of his threats, and his reasons, his commands, and his prayers; he promises—he vows—he swears that there is safety in holding on—safety, *if Greeks will be brave!* The men hear and are moved, but the gale rouses itself once more, and again the raging sea comes trampling over the timbers that are the life of all. The fierce Hydriot advances one step nearer to the Captain, and the angry growl of the people goes floating down the wind, but they listen, they waver once more, and once more resolve, then waver again, thus doubtfully hanging between the terrors of the storm and the persuasion of glorious speech, as though it were the Athenian that talked, and Philip of Macedon that thundered on the weather-bow.

Brave thoughts winged on Grecian words gained their natural mastery over Terror; the brigantine held on her course, and reached smooth water at last.

Alexander William Kinglake.

Full Fathom Five

LOSS OF THE ROYAL GEORGE

TOLL for the brave!
The brave that are no more !
All sunk beneath the wave
Fast by their native shore !

Eight hundred of the brave
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel
And laid her on her side.

A land-breeze shook the shrouds
And she was over-set ;
Down went the Royal George,
With all her crew complete.

Toll for the brave !
Brave Kempenfelt is gone ;
His last sea-fight is fought,
His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle ;
No tempest gave the shock ;
She sprang no fatal leak,
She ran upon no rock.

His sword was in its sheath,
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down
With twice four hundred men.

The Cruelty of the Sea

Weigh the vessel up
Once dreaded by our foes!
And mingle with our cup
The tears that England owes.

Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again
Full charged with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main :

But Kempenfelt is gone,
His victories are o'er;
And he and his eight hundred
Shall plough the wave no more.

Thomas Campbell.

ADRIFT

I NEED not tell you what it is to be knocking about in an open boat. I remember nights and days of calm when we pulled, we pulled, and the boat seemed to stand still, as if bewitched within the circle of the sea horizon. I remember the heat, the deluge of rain-squalls that kept us baling for dear life (but filled our water-cask), and I remember sixteen hours on end with a mouth dry as a cinder and a steering-oar over the stern to keep my first command head on to a breaking sea. I did not know how good a man I was till then. I remember the

Full Fathom Five

drawn faces, the dejected figures of my two men and I remember my youth and the feeling that will never come back any more—the feeling that I could last for ever, outlast the sea, the earth, and all men; the deceitful feeling that lures us on to joys, to perils, to vain effort—to death; the triumphant conviction of strength, the heat of life in the handful of dust, the glow in the heart that with every year grows dim, grows cold, grows small, and expires—and expires, too soon, too soon—before life itself.

Joseph Conrad.

THE MISSING SHIP

WE one day descried some shapeless object drifting at a distance. At sea everything that breaks the monotony of the surrounding expanse attracts attention. It proved to be the mast of a ship that must have been completely wrecked, for there were remains of handkerchiefs by which some of the crew had fastened themselves to this spar, to prevent their being washed off by the waves. There was no trace by which the name of the ship could be ascertained. The wreck had evidently drifted about for many months; clusters of shell-fish had fastened about it, and long sea-weed flaunted at its sides. But where, thought I, are the crew? Their struggle has long been over—they have gone down amidst the roar of the tempest—their bones

The Cruelty of the Sea

lie whitening among the caverns of the deep. Silence, oblivion, like the waves, have closed over them, and no one can tell the story of their end. What sighs have been wafted after that ship! What prayers offered up at the deserted fireside at home! How often has the mistress, the wife, the mother, pored over the daily news to catch some casual intelligence of this rover of the deep! How has expectation darkened into anxiety—anxiety into dread—and dread into despair! Alas! not one memento may ever return for love to cherish. All that may ever be known is, that she sailed from her port “and was never heard of more.”

Washington Irving.

TO THE RESCUE

BLACK was the oozy lift,
Black was the sea and land;
Hither and thither, thick with foam and drift,
Did the deep Waters shift,
Swinging with iron clash on stone and sand.
Faintlier the heavy Rain was falling,
Faintlier, faintlier the Wind was calling,
With hollower echoes up the drifting dark!
While the swift rockets shooting through the night
Flash'd past the foam-flecked reef with phantom light
And showed the piteous outline of the bark,
Rising and falling like a living thing
Shuddering, shivering
While, howling beastlike, the white breakers there

Full Fathom Five

Spat blindness in the dank eyes of despair.
Then one cried, "She has sunk!"—and on the shore
Men shook, and on the heights the women cried;
But, lo! the outline of the bark once more,
While flashing faint the blue light rose and died.
Ah, God, put out Thy hand! all for the sake
Of little ones, and weary hearts that wake,
Be gentle! chain the fierce waves with a chain!
Let the gaunt seaman's little boys and girls
Sit on his knee and play with his black curls
 Yet once again!
And breathe the frail lad safely through the foam
Back to the hungry mother in her home!
And spare the bad man with the frenzied eye;
Kiss him for Christ's sake, bid Thy Death go by—
 He hath no heart to die.

Now faintlier blew the wind, the thin rain ceased,
The thick cloud cleared like smoke from off the
 strand,
For, lo! a bright blue glimmer in the East—
 God putting out his Hand!
And overhead the rack grew thinner too,
 And through the smoky gorge
The Wind drave past the stars, and faint they flew,
 Like sparks blown from a forge!
And now the thousand foam-flames o' the sea
 Hither and thither flashing visibly;
And grey lights hither and thither came and fled,
Like dim shapes searching for the drown'd dead;

The Cruelty of the Sea

And where these shapes most thickly glimmer'd by,
Out on the cruel reef the black hulk lay,
And cast against the kindling eastern sky,
Its shape gigantic on the shrouding spray.

Silent upon the shore, the fishers fed
Their eyes on horror, waiting for the close,
When in the midst of them a shrill voice rose :
“The boat ! the boat !” it said.

Like creatures startled from a trance, they turned
To her who spake ; tall in the midst stood she,
With arms uplifted, and with eyes that yearned
Out on the murmuring sea.

Some, shrugging shoulders, homeward turned their
eyes,

And others answered back in brutal speech ;
But some, strong-hearted, uttering shouts and cries,
Followed the fearless woman up the beach.

A rush to seaward—black confusion—then
A struggle with the surf upon the strand—
'Mid shrieks of women, cries of desperate men,
The long oars smite, the black boat springs from
land !

Around the thick spray flies ;
The waves roll on and seem to overwhelm.
With blowing hair and onward gazing eyes
The woman stands erect and grips the helm. . . .

Now fearless heart, Meg Blane, or all must die !
Let not the skill'd hand thwart the steadfast eye !

Full Fathom Five

The crested wave comes near,—crag-like it towers
Above you, scattering round its chilly showers :
One flutter of the hand and all is done !
Now steel thy heart, thou woman-hearted one !

Softly the good helm guides ;
Round to the liquid ridge the boat leaps light,
Hidden an instant,—on the foaming height,
Dripping and quivering like a bird, it rides,
Athwart the ragged rift the Moon looms pale,
Driven before the gale
And making silvern shadows with her breath,
Whereon the sighing sea it shimmereth ;
And, lo ! the light illumines the reef ; 'tis shed
Full on the wreck, as the dark boat draws nigh.
A crash !—the wreck upon the reef is fled ;
A scream !—and all is still beneath the sky
Save the wild waters as they whirl and cry.

Robert Buchanan.

SHIPWRECKED

WE knew nothing where we were, or upon what
land it was we were driven—whether an
island or the main, whether inhabited or
not inhabited. As the rage of the wind was still
great, though rather less than at first, we could not
so much as hope to have the ship hold many
minutes without breaking into pieces, unless the

The Cruelty of the Sea

wind, by a kind of miracle, should turn immediately about. In a word, we sat looking upon one another, and expecting death every moment, and every man, accordingly, preparing for another world, for there was little or nothing for us to do in this. . . .

Now, though we thought that the wind did a little abate, yet the ship having thus stuck upon the sand, and sticking too fast for us to expect her getting off, we were in a dreadful condition indeed, and had nothing to do but to think of saving our lives as well as we could. We had a boat at our stern just before the storm, but she was first staved by dashing against the ship's rudder, and in the next place, she broke away, and was either sunk, or was driven off to sea ; so there was no hope from her. We had another boat on board, but how to get her off into the sea was a doubtful thing. However, there was no time to debate, for we fancied the ship would break in pieces every minute, and some one told us she was actually broken already.

In this distress, the mate of our vessel laid hold of the boat, and with the help of the rest of the men, got her slung over the ship's side ; and getting all into her, let go, and committed ourselves, being eleven in number, to God's mercy and the wild sea ; for, though the storm was abated considerably, yet the sea ran dreadfully high upon the shore, and might well be called *den wild zee*, as the Dutch call the sea in a storm.

Full Fathom Five

And now our case was very dismal indeed: for we all saw plainly, that the sea went so high that no boat could live, and that we should inevitably be drowned. As to making sail, we had none, nor, if we had, could we have done anything with it; so we worked at the oar towards the land, though with heavy hearts, like men going to execution; for we knew that when the boat came nearer the shore, she would be dashed in a thousand pieces by the breach of the sea. However, we committed our souls to God in the most earnest manner; and the winds driving us towards the shore, we hastened our destruction with our own hands, pulling as well as we could towards land. . . .

After we had rowed or rather driven about a league and a half, as we reckoned it, a raging wave, mountain-like, came rolling astern of us, and plainly bade us expect the *coup de grâce*. In a word, it took us with such a fury, that it upset the boat at once; and separating us, as well from the boat as from one another, gave us not time to say, "O God!" for we were all swallowed up in a moment.

Daniel Defoe.

MAROONED

I

A PLACID sea, a breathing breast,
A wistful blue like a Scotch girl's een;
Upon the light of her sails, at rest,
A saucy schooner may be seen.

The Cruelty of the Sea

With each soft roll she shows her guns,
Her brasswork sparks in little suns.
The copper, rising to the bends,
A gold light with the brine's blue blends.
Her silk-like sails with shadows creeping
Flash out and fade like a gull's wings sweeping.
A beautiful and deadly schooner,
Whose flag proclaims that Pyrates own her.
 Why lurketh she anear that isle
 Hove to within, say, half a mile?
The larboard gangway is unshipped and overboard
 a boat is hove :
She breaks the sea like a half-tide rock—you'd
 think that jolly boat was stove.
"Now tumble in !" shouts Captain Skull. "Give
 him a musket !" is his yell :
"Some biscuit, water, powder and ball : then leave
 him to enjoy that hell !"

II

That hell! at noon heaven's eye of fire,
 Stares shadowless upon the island.
The foam-heap'd beach soars high and higher,
 Where rears the mid-isle's bush-strown highland.
On coral shore whose sheen is pearl,
Breakers their rainbow-thunder hurl ; —
One mountain lifts a burning cone ;
Clouds rise from it : it stands alone.
'Tis Nature's altar to her Lord,
Who there, with heart of fire's adored.

Full Fathom Five

Prismatic birds there sing and call ;
With madrigals and waterfall
Sweetens all sound ; and soft delight
Is found in shadows cool as night.
Who sighs not for this Paradise—but hold ! no
human thing is there !
Trees, flowers and sparkling cataracts, and perfumed
dells, gay birds o' the air ;
The music of the foaming trees, the organ-throb of
the breaker's roll—
But these things to a lonely man ? can they suffice
a lonely soul !

III

There's a fissure in that coral strand,
Beyond it is a wide ravine.
The surf roars high on either hand,
But the water smoothly spreads between.
For that small creek the rowers made,
Fierce, black-hued rogues in heart and trade,
With pistol'd belts and tassel'd caps,
Shapes fit for chains and iron wraps.
Their oars strike sun-gold from the brine—
No brutaller fiends e'er crossed the Line.
And with them sat their murdered mate,
Alive, but doomed to an hideous fate.
To live alone, alone to die,
Never a ship to come anigh.
To starve, to groan, O hearts of stone, through the
blinding day and moonless night !

The Cruelty of the Sea

To stare into the distant sea till madness come with
fainting sight !
Such thoughts were in those ruffians' hearts when
now and then they heard him moan,
Fiends as they were they *could* not jeer and think
of him as *there* alone !

IV

They left him and he sat him down ;
Beside him were his food and gun ;
He watched them go : his fixed frown
Was marble as by sculptor done.
Upon the blue the row-boat blurred,
She dwindled till she looked a bird,
Then melted in the schooner's light,
Who trimmed her sails and took to flight.
His eye was on her as she went ;
Like an ice-spire with the blue she blent,
Sank, star-like, in the liquid air,
And the great Sea circled bright and bare.
As though of stone he sat and frowned
At the Sea that swarmed and writhed around ;
Till the schooner, like a meteor, dipped and left
the firm rim tenantless ;
Then rose he with heart-breaking sigh and scowl of
wrath and fierce distress.
What was the hapless wretch's crime which he in
this wise must atone ?
He looked aloft—God was not there : nor in that
isle—he was alone !

Full Fathom Five

V

Of all the Pyrates of his age,
By the gallows' height was this man worst.
Martel and Bonnet, Teach and Page,
Rackham and others of the Accurst,
Roberts and Briggs and Smith and Low,
Were kings in the Rovers' Inferno.
But this man, Roger Coate by name,
In frightful crime put all to shame.
In arson, plunder, murder, rape,
In villainy of every shape,
In cruelty beyond men's speech,
Triple-crowning even Blackbeard Teach,
The completest artist then afloat
Was this marooned man, Roger Coate.
He had been Captain of the ship when Moses Skull
had served as mate;
But Skull had won the crew's regard and turned
their fear of Coate to hate.
"Maroon him!" was the cry of all who swore by
Skull and his crossbone:
And so we find the schooner gone and Captain
Roger Coate alone.

VI

How shocking is the moonlit deep
Who views it from his island jail!
How terrible the hills which sleep,
The flowers which stand up cold and pale!
If this be to the lonely man,

The Cruelty of the Sea

The honest Selkirk of Ju'an.
Then what the horrors fill the air
When the lone soul finds that God's not there!
'Tis Memory's actors throng the scene,
And mouth of now and what hath been.
Each enters at the devil's nod
For Satan is, where there's no God.
And what stage should the Pyrate's be
If not for hell-fired mimicry
Of the ravish'd wife and the flaming ship, of the
murder'd Captain's corpse in water;
Of the cruel plank and the smoking hold, of drink,
of booty, lust, and slaughter?
They come to flout in reeling bout, to leap, to bleed,
to drown, to groan—
Wish ye not joy to the man marooned who's with
his goblins all alone?

VII

That ocean gem's his ocean grave;
His ghosts are with him night and day;
In nightmares shall the spectres rave,
They'll jibber watching him decay.
They'll act again their purple part:
With teeth of fire they'll chew his heart.
He'll flee them on the coral sand,
They'll fly with him on either hand.
He'll seek the cloisters of the brake
And find them waiting, wide awake.
They'll chase him to the dizzy steep

Full Fathom Five

But the heroic murderer durst not leap.
They'll shriek with laughter when he groans
And chew his heart and pick his bones.
In thunder, gale, and bellowing sea, he'll hear the
Spirits of the Past.
In peace or storm each goblin plays the hideous
part for which he's cast.
His skeleton by sailors found shall never make his
story known,
How lovely was that Godless isle, how terrible his
life alone.

W. Clark Russell.

GOD HELP OUR MEN AT SEA

THE wild night comes like an owl to its lair;
The black clouds follow fast;
And the sun-gleams die and the lightnings glare,
And the ships go heaving past, past, past—
The ships go heaving past!
Bar the doors, and higher, higher
Pile the faggots on the fire!
Now abroad by many a light
Empty seats there are to-night;
Empty seats that none may fill,
For the storm grows louder still!
How it surges and swells through the gorges and
dells,
Under the ledges and over the lea,

The Cruelty of the Sea

Where a watery sound goeth moaning around.
God help our Men at Sea!

Oh! never a tempest blew on the shore,
But that some heart did groan
For a darling voice it would hear no more,
And a face that had left it lone, lone, lone—
A face that had left it lone!

I am watching by a pane
Darkened with the gusty rain;
Watching through a mist of tears,
Sad with thoughts of other years:
For a brother I did miss
In a stormy time like this.

Ha! the torrent howls past, like a fiend on the blast,
Under the ledges and over the lea;
And the pent waters gleam, and the wild surges
scream.

God help our Men at Sea!

Ah, Lord, they may grope through the dark to find
Thy hand within the gale;
And cries may rise on the wings of the wind
From mariners weary and pale, pale, pale—
From mariners weary and pale!
'Tis a fearful thing to know,
While the storm-winds loudly blow,
That a man can sometimes come
Too near to his father's home;

Full Fathom Five

So that he shall kneel and say,

“Lord, I would be far away !”

Ho ! the hurricanes roar round a dangerous shore,

Under the ledges and over the lea ;

And there twinkles a light on the billows so white—

God help our Men at Sea !

Henry Kendall.

X

“RULE, BRITANNIA”

“ Rule, Britannia ”

RULE, BRITANNIA

WHEN Britain first at Heaven's command
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of her land,
And guardian angels sung the strain :
Rule, Britannia ! Britannia rules the waves !
Britons never shall be slaves.

The nations not so blest as thee
Must in their turn to tyrants fall,
While thou shalt flourish great and free
The dread and envy of them all.

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
More dreadful from each foreign stroke ;
As the loud blast that tears the skies
Serves but to root thy native oak.

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame ;
All their attempts to bend thee down
Will but arouse thy generous flame,
And work their woe and thy renown.

To thee belongs the rural reign ;
Thy cities shall with commerce shine ;
All thine shall be the subject main,
And every shore it circles thine !

Full Fathom Five

The Muses, still with Freedom found,
Shall to thy happy coast repair ;
Blest Isle, with matchless beauty crown'd
And manly hearts to guard the fair:—
Rule, Britannia! Britannia rules the waves!
Britons never shall be slaves!

James Thomson.

YE GENTLEMEN OF ENGLAND

YE gentlemen of England
That live at home at ease,
Ah! little do you think upon
The dangers of the seas.
Give ear unto the mariners,
And they will plainly shew
All the cares and the fears
When the stormy winds do blow.

If enemies oppose us
When England is at war
With any foreign nation
We fear not wound or scar ;
Our roaring guns shall teach 'em
Our valour for to know,
While they reel on the keel,
And the stormy winds do blow.

“ Rule, Britannia ”

Then courage, all brave mariners,
And never be dismay'd ;
While we have bold adventurers,
We ne'er shall want a trade :
Our merchants will employ us
To fetch them wealth, we know ;
Then be bold—work for gold,
When the stormy winds do blow.

Martin Parker.

BRITAIN'S BEST BULWARKS ARE HER WOODEN WALLS

WHEN Britain on her sea-girt shore
Her ancient Druids erst address'd,
What aid, she cried, shall I implore?
What best defence, by numbers press'd?
The hostile nations round thee rise,—
The mystic oracle replied,—
And view thine isle with envious eyes;
Their threats defy, their rage deride,
Nor fear invasion from those adverse Gauls:
Britain's best bulwarks are her wooden walls.

Thine oaks, descending to the main,
With floating forts shall stem the tide,
Asserting Britain's liquid reign,
Where'er her thund'ring navies ride.

Full Fathom Five

Nor less to peaceful arts inclined,
Where commerce opens all her stores,
In social bands shall league mankind,
And join the sea-divided shores,
Spread thy white wings where naval glory calls :
Britain's best bulwarks are her wooden walls.

Hail, happy isle! what though thy vales
No vine-impurpled tribute yield,
Nor fann'd with odour-breathing gales,
Nor crops spontaneous glad the field.
Yet liberty rewards the toil
Of industry to labour prone,
Who jocund ploughs the grateful soil,
And reaps the harvest she has sown ;
While other realms tyrannic sway enthral,
Britain's best bulwarks are her wooden walls.
Thomas Augustine Arne.

YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND

YE Mariners of England
That guard our native seas!
Whose flag has braved, a thousand years,
The battle and the breeze!
Your glorious standard again
To match another foe:

“ Rule, Britannia ”

And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long
And the stormy winds do blow.

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave—
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And Ocean was their grave:
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long
And the stormy winds do blow.

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep;
Her march is o'er the mountain-waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak
She quells the flood below—
As they roar on the shore
When the stormy winds do blow;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn;
Till danger's troubled night depart
And the star of peace return.

Full Fathom Five

Then, then, ye ocean-warriors!
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow;
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow.

Thomas Campbell.

HOME-THOUGHTS FROM THE SEA

N**O**BLY, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the North-
west died away;
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking
into Cadiz Bay;
Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar
lay;
In the dimmest North-east distance dawned Gibraltar
grand and gray;
“Here and here did England help me: how can I
help England?”—say,
Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise
and pray,
While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.

Robert Browning.

“ Rule, Britannia ”

THE ARETHUSA

COME, all you jolly sailors bold,
Whose hearts are cast in honour's mould,
While English glory I unfold,
Huzza to the Arethusa!

She is a frigate tight and brave,
As ever stemm'd the dashing wave:

Her men are staunch
To their favourite launch,
And when the foe shall meet our fire,
Sooner than strike we'll all expire
On board of the Arethusa.

'Twas with the spring-fleet she went out,
The English channel to cruise about,
When four French sail, in show so stout,
Bore down on the Arethusa.

The famed Belle Poule straight ahead did lie,
The Arethusa scorn'd to fly,
Not a sheet or a tack,
Or a brace did she slack,
Though the Frenchmen laugh'd and thought it stuff,
But they knew not a handful of men how tough,
On board of the Arethusa.

On deck five hundred men did dance,
The stoutest they could find in France,
We with two hundred did advance,
On board of the Arethusa.

Full Fathom Five

Our captain hail'd the Frenchman, ho!
The Frenchmen they cried out, hallo!
 Bear down, d'ye see,
 To our admiral's lee.
No, no, says the Frenchman, that can't be;
Then I must lug you along with me,
 Says the saucy Arethusa.

The fight was off the Frenchman's land,
We forced them back upon their strand,
For we fought till not a plank would stand,
 Of the gallant Arethusa.
And now we've driven the foe ashore,
Never to fight with Britons more,
 Let each fill a glass,
 To his favourite lass!
A health to our captain and officers true,
And all that belong to the jovial crew,
 On board of the Arethusa.

Prince Hoare.

THE BATTLE OF THE BALTIC

OF Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
 When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone;

“ Rule, Britannia ”

By each gun the lighted brand
In a bold determined hand,
And the prince of all the land
Led them on.

Like leviathans afloat
Lay their bulwarks on the brine;
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line:
It was ten of April morn by the chime:
As they drifted on their path
There was silence deep as death;
And the boldest held his breath
For a time.

But the might of England flush'd
To anticipate the scene;
And her van the fleeter rush'd
O'er the deadly space between.
“ Hearts of oak ! ” our captains cried, when each gun
From its adamant lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

Again! again! again!
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back;—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom:—

Full Fathom Five

Then ceased—and all is wail,
As they strike the shatter'd sail;
Or in conflagration pale
Light the gloom.

Out spoke the victor then
As he hail'd them o'er the wave,
“Ye are brothers! ye are men!
And we conquer but to save:—
So peace instead of death let us bring:
But yield, proud foe, thy fleet
With the crews, at England's feet,
And make submission meet
To our King.”

Then Denmark bless'd our chief
That he gave her wounds repose;
And the sounds of joy and grief
From her people wildly rose,
As death withdrew his shades from the day:
While the sun look'd smiling bright
O'er a wide and woeful sight,
Where the fires of funeral light
Died away.

Now joy, old England, raise!
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze,
Whilst the wine-cup shines in light;
And yet amidst that joy and uproar,

“ Rule, Britannia ”

Let us think of them that sleep
Full many a fathom deep
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore.

Brave hearts! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true,
On the deck of fame that died,
With the gallant good Riou:
Soft sigh the winds of Heaven o'er their grave!
While the billow mournful rolls
And the mermaid's song condoles
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave!

Thomas Campbell.

XI
THE RETURN

The Return

HOMEWARD BOUND

HEAD the ship for England!
Shake out every sail!
Blithe leap the billows,
Merry sings the gale.
Captain, work the reck'ning;
How many knots a day?—
Round the world and home again,
That's the sailor's way!

We've traded with the Yankees,
Brazilians and Chinese;
We've laugh'd with dusky beauties
In shade of tall palm-trees;
Across the Line and Gulf-stream—
Round by Table Bay—
Everywhere and home again,
That's the sailor's way!

Nightly stands our North Star
Higher on our bow;
Straight we run for England;
Our thoughts are in it now.
Jolly times with friends ashore,
When we've drawn our pay!—
All about and home again,
That's the sailor's way!

Full Fathom Five

Tom will to his parents,
Jack will to his dear,
Joe to wife and children,
Bob to pipes and beer;
Dicky to the dancing-room,
To hear the fiddles play;—
Round the world and home again,
That's the sailor's way!
*Round the world and home again,
That's the sailor's way!*

William Allingham.

THE SAILOR'S JOURNAL

'T WAS post meridian, half-past four,
By signal I from Nancy parted;
At six she lingered on the shore,
With uplift hands and broken-hearted.
At seven, while taughening the forestay,
I saw her faint, or else 'twas fancy;
At eight we all got under way,
And bade a long adieu to Nancy!

Night came, and now eight bells had rung,
While careless sailors, ever cheery,
On the mid watch so jovial sung,
With tempers labour cannot weary.
I, little to their mirth inclined,
While tender thoughts rushed on my fancy,

The Return

And my warm sighs increased the wind,
Looked on the moon, and thought of Nancy.

Next morn a storm came on at four,
At six the elements in motion
Plunged me and three poor sailors more
Headlong within the foaming ocean.
Poor wretches! they soon found their graves;
For me—it may be only fancy,—
But Love seemed to forbid the waves
To snatch me from the arms of Nancy!

Scarce the foul hurricane was cleared,
Scarce winds and waves had ceased to rattle,
When a bold enemy appeared,
And, dauntless, we prepared for battle.
And now, while some loved friend or wife
Like lightning rushed on every fancy,
To Providence I trusted life,
Put up a prayer, and thought of Nancy!

At last,—'twas in the month of May,—
The crew, it being lovely weather,
At three A.M. discovered day,
And England's chalky cliffs together.
At seven up channel how we bore,
While hopes and fears rushed on my fancy;
At twelve I gaily jumped ashore,
And to my throbbing heart pressed Nancy!
Charles Dibdin.

Full Fathom Five

THE SAILOR'S WIFE

AND are ye sure the news is true?
And are ye sure he's weel?
Is this a time to think o' wark?
Ye jades, lay by your wheel;
Is this the time to spin a thread,
When Colin's at the door?
Reach down my cloak, I'll to the quay,
And see him come ashore.
For there's nae luck about the house,
There's nae luck at a';
There's little pleasure in the house
When our gudeman's awa'.

And gie to me my bigonnet,
My bishop's satin gown;
For I maun tell the baillie's wife
That Colin's in the town.
My Turkey slippers maun gae on,
My stockins pearly blue;
It's a' to please our gudeman,
For he's baith leal and true.

Rise, lass, and mak a clean fireside,
Put on the muckle pot;
Gie little Kate her button gown
And Jock his Sunday coat;
And mak their shoon as black as slaes,
Their hose as white as snaw;

The Return

It's a' to please my ain gudeman,
For he's been long awa'.

There's twa fat hens upo' the coop
Been fed this month and mair ;
Mak haste and thraw their necks about,
That Colin weel may fare ;
And spread the table neat and clean,
Gar ilka thing look braw,
For wha can tell how Colin fared
When he was far awa' ?

Sae true his heart, sae smooth his speech,
His breath like caller air ;
His very foot has music in't
As he comes up the stair—
And will I see his face again ?
And will I hear him speak ?
I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
In troth I'm like to greet.

If Colin's weel, and weel content,
I hae nae mair to crave :
And gin I live to keep him sae,
I'm blest aboon the lave :
And will I see his face again,
And will I hear him speak ?
I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
In troth I'm like to greet.

Full Fathom Five

For there's nae luck about the house,
There's nae luck at a';
There's little pleasure in the house
When our gudeman's awa'.

William Julius Mickle.

IN SIGHT OF LAND

THE friendly breeze freshened again next day, and on we went once more before it, gallantly: descriing now and then an English ship going homeward under shortened sail, while we with every inch of canvas crowded on, dashed gaily past, and left her far behind. Towards evening, the weather turned hazy, with a drizzling rain; and soon became so thick, that we sailed, as it were, in a cloud. Still we swept onward like a phantom ship, and many an eager eye glanced up to where the Look-out on the mast kept watch for Holyhead.

At length his long-expected cry was heard, and at the same moment there shone out from the haze and mist ahead, a gleaming light, which presently was gone, and soon returned, and soon was gone again. Whenever it came back, the eyes of all on board brightened and sparkled like itself: and there we all stood, watching this revolving light upon the rock at Holyhead, and praising it for its brightness and its friendly warning, and lauding it, in short, above all other signal lights that ever were

The Return

displayed, until it once more glimmered faintly in the distance, far behind us.

Then it was time to fire a gun for a pilot; and almost before its smoke had cleared away, a little boat with a light at her mast-head came bearing down upon us through the darkness, swiftly. And presently, our sails being backed, she ran alongside; and the hoarse pilot, wrapped and muffled in pea-coats and shawls to the very bridge of his weather-ploughed-up nose, stood bodily among us on the deck. And I think if that pilot had wanted to borrow fifty pounds for an indefinite period on no security, we should have engaged to lend it him, among us, before his boat had dropped astern, or (which is the same thing) before every scrap of news in the paper he brought with him had become the common property of all.

We turned in pretty late that night, and turned out pretty soon next morning. By six o'clock we clustered on the deck, prepared to go ashore; and looked upon the spires, and roofs, and smoke of Liverpool. By eight we all sat down in one of its Hotels, to eat and drink together for the last time. And by nine we had shaken hands all round, and broken up our social company for ever.

Charles Dickens.

Full Fathom Five

IN FALMOUTH HARBOUR

THE large, calm harbour lies below
Long terraced lines of circling light ;
Without, the deep sea currents flow :
And here are stars and night.

No sight, no sound, no living stir,
But such as perfect the stilly bay :
So hushed it is, the voyager
Shrinks at the thought of day.

We glide by many a lanterned mast ;
Our mournful horns blow wild to warn
Yon looming pier : the sailors
Cast their ropes, and watch for morn.

Strange murmurs from the sleeping town,
And sudden creak of lonely oars
Crossing the water, travel down
The roadstead, the dim shores.

A charm is on the silent bay ;
Charms of the sea, charms of the land.
Memories of open wind convey
Peace to this harbour strand.

Far off, Saint David's crags descend
On seas of desolate storm : and far
From this pure rest, the Land's drear End,
And running waters, are.

The Return

Well was it worth to have each hour
Of high and perilous blowing wind:
For here, for now, deep peace hath power
To conquer the worn mind.

I have passed over the rough sea,
And over the white harbour bar:
And this is Death's dreamland to me,
Led hither by a star.

And what shall the dawn be? Hush thee, nay!
Soft, soft is night, and calm and still:
Save that day cometh, what of day
Knoweth thou: good, or ill?

Content thee! Not the annulling light
Of any pitiless dawn is here;
Thou art alone with ancient night:
And all the stars are clear.

Only the night air, and the dream;
Only the far, sweet-smelling wave;
The stilly sounds, the circling gleam,
And thine: and thine a grave.

Lionel Johnson.

Full Fathom Five

AFTER A TEMPESTUOUS VOYAGE

AS slow I climb the cliff's ascending side,
Much musing on the track of terror past,
When o'er the dark wave rode the howling
blast,
Pleased I look back, and view the tranquil tide
That laves the pebbled shores ; and now the beam
Of evening smiles on the grey battlement,
And yon forsaken tower that time has rent :
The lifted oar far off with transient gleam
Is touched, and hushed is all the billowy deep !
Soothed by the scene, thus on tired Nature's breast
A stillness slowly steals, and kindred rest ;
While sea-sounds lull her as she sinks to sleep,
Like melodies that mourn upon the lyre,
Waked by the breeze, and, as they mourn, expire !

William Lisle Bowles.

A PAID-OFF CREW

AT the corner I stopped to take my last look at the crew of the *Narcissus*. They were swaying irresolute and noisy on the broad flagstones before the Mint. They were bound for the Black Horse, where men, in fur caps with brutal faces and in shirt sleeves, dispense out of varnished barrels the illusions of strength, mirth, and happiness ; the illusion of splendour and poetry of life, to the paid-off crews of southern-going ships. From afar I saw

The Return

them discoursing, with jovial eyes and clumsy gestures, while the sea of life thundered into their ears ceaseless and unheeded. And swaying about there on the white stones, surrounded by the hurry and clamour of men, they appeared to be creatures of another kind—lost, alone, forgetful, and doomed; they were like castaways, like reckless and joyous castaways, like mad castaways making merry in the storm and upon an insecure ledge of a treacherous rock. The roar of the town resembled the roar of topping breakers, merciless and strong, with a loud voice and cruel purpose; but overhead the clouds broke; a flood of sunshine streamed down the walls of grimy houses. The dark knot of seamen drifted in sunshine. To the left of them the trees in Tower Gardens sighed, the stones of the Tower gleaming, seemed to stir in the play of light, as if remembering suddenly all the great joys and sorrows of the past, the fighting prototypes of these men; press-gangs; mutinous cries; the wailing of women by the riverside, and the shouts of men welcoming victories. The sunshine of Heaven fell like a gift of grace on the mud of the earth, on the remembering and mute stones, on greed, selfishness; on the anxious faces of forgetful men. And to the right of the dark group the stained front of the Mint, cleansed by the flood of light, stood out for a moment, dazzling and white, like a marble palace in a fairy tale. The crew of the *Narcissus* drifted out of sight.

Joseph Conrad.

ENVOI

Envoi

THE CHURCHYARD

IN the churchyard, growing gradually dim and ethereal, were laid many bodies from which the white vampires of the main had sucked out the souls. Here mouldered fisher lads, who had whistled over the nets, and dreamed rough dreams of winning island girls and breeding hardy mariners, who had for so long defied the ocean that when they knew themselves taken at the last, they turned their rugged faces down to their enemy with a stony and ironic wonder. And here, too, among these cast-up bodies of the drowned, lay many women who had loved the prey of the sea, and kissed the cheeks turned acrid by its winds and waters. Some of them had died from heart-sickness, cursing the sea. Some had faded, withering like the pale sand roses beside the sea. Some had lived to old age by empty hearths, in the sound of the sea.

Inscriptions faded upon the stones that lay above them. Texts of comfort in which the fine, salt films crept, faint verses of sweet hymns defiled by the perching sea-birds, old rhymes like homely ejaculations of very simple hearts, sank into the gathering darkness on every hand. The graves seemed murmuring to the night: "Look on me, I hold a lover"; "And I—I keep fast a maiden"; "And within my

Full Fathom Five

arms crumbles a little child caught by the sea";
"And I fold a mother, whose son is in the hideous
water foliage of the depths of the sea"; "And I
embrace an old captain whom the sea loved even
in his hollow age."

Robert Hichens.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE Compilers of this Anthology desire gratefully to acknowledge the courtesy and generosity of those authors, literary executors, and publishers who have kindly permitted the insertion of copyright matter. Their thanks are due to:

- MR. GEORGE BARLOW for the poem *O Sea*;
MR. F. T. BULLEN and MESSRS. THOMAS NELSON
AND SONS for a passage from "Idylls of the
Sea," by F. T. Bullen;
MR. F. T. BULLEN and MESSRS. SMITH, ELDER
AND Co. for a passage from "The Cruise of the
'Cachalot,'" by F. T. Bullen;
THE REV. HENRY W. CLARK for an unpublished
poem *The Moon-path on the Sea*;
MR. JOSEPH CONRAD for passages from "Youth"
and "The Nigger of the Narcissus";
PROFESSOR DOWDEN for the poem *Evening, by the
Sea*;
SIR WILLIAM S. GILBERT for the ballad *The Yarn
of the "Nancy Bell"*;
MR. GERALD GOULD for the poem *The Sea-
Captain*;

Full Fathom Five

MR. ROBERT HICHENS and MESSRS. METHUEN AND Co. for a passage from *The Sea Changes* in the volume "Tongues of Conscience";

LADY LINDSAY for the poem *Wind and Foam*;

MR. W. CLARK RUSSELL for the ballad *Marooned*, from "The Turnpike Sailor, or, Rhymes on the Road";

MR. H. M. TOMLINSON for a passage from "The Fog" (*English Review*, June 1909); and

MR. THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON for the poems, *A Starry Night at Sea*, *The Lighthouse Girl*, and *A Morning Swim off Guernsey*.

MRS. ALLINGHAM for the poems *The Lighthouse*, *Down on the Shore*, and *Homeward Bound*, by William Allingham;

MR. ROBERT S. GARNETT for the poem *The Ballad of a Boat*, by Richard Garnett;

MISS HARRIET JAY and MESSRS. CHATTO AND WINDUS for the poem *Calm and Storm* and an extract from *Meg Blane*, by Robert Buchanan;

THE HON. LADY LEIGHTON WARREN for the poem, *The Ocean Grave*, by Lord de Tabley;

THE LITERARY EXECUTOR OF THE LATE OSCAR WILDE for the poem *Les Silhouettes*, by Oscar Wilde;

THE EARL OF LYTTON for the poems *The Shore* and *Sea-Side Elegiacs*, by the late Lord Lytton ("Owen Meredith");

MRS. WILLIAM SHARP for the poems *Oceanus* (from

Acknowledgements

“Songs and Poems Old and New”) and *The Burthen of the Tide* (from “The Hills of Dream”) by William Sharp, “Fiona Macleod”; and

MR. THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON for an extract from the poem *By the North Sea*, by Algernon C. Swinburne.

MESSRS. LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO. for an extract from the poem “At Sea” in “Potiphar’s Wife and Other Poems,” by Sir Edwin Arnold;

MESSRS. MACMILLAN AND CO. LTD., for the poem *By the Sea*, by Christina G. Rossetti; an extract from the poem *Dover Beach*, by Matthew Arnold; and a passage from “At Last,” by Charles Kingsley; and

MR. ELKIN MATHEWS for an extract from the poem *In Falmouth Harbour*, by Lionel Johnson.

H. M.

L. M.



CHISWICK PRESS : CHARLES WHITTINGHAM AND CO.
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE, LONDON.

Fcap. 8vo. 3s. 6d. net.

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